SEPTEMBER, 1901.

THE ROYAL

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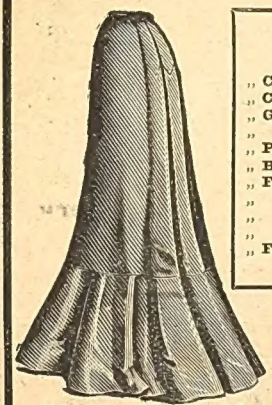

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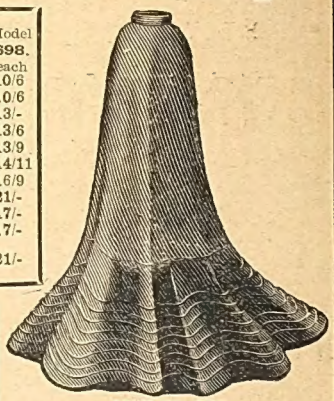

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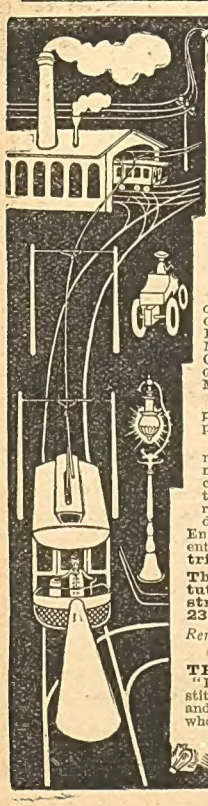

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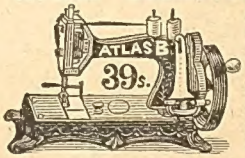

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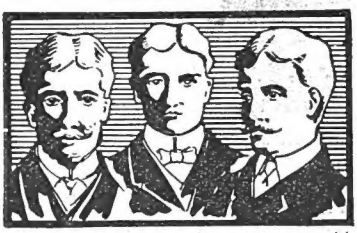

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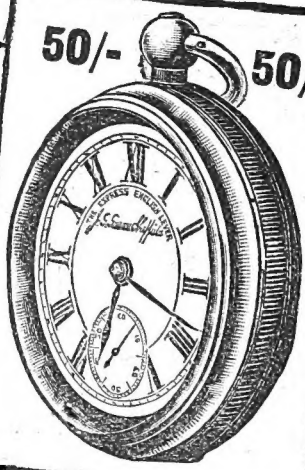

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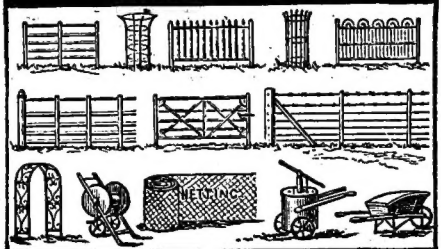

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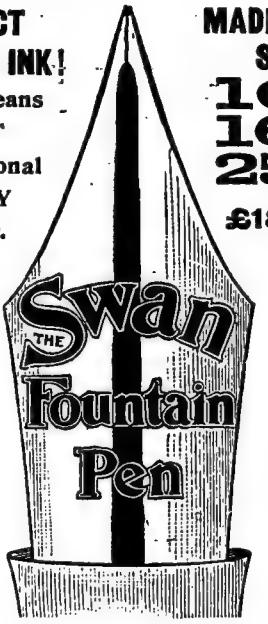

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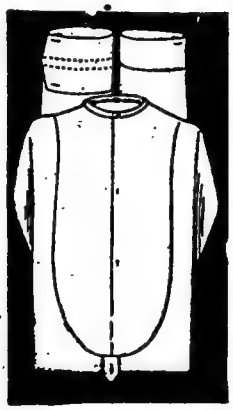

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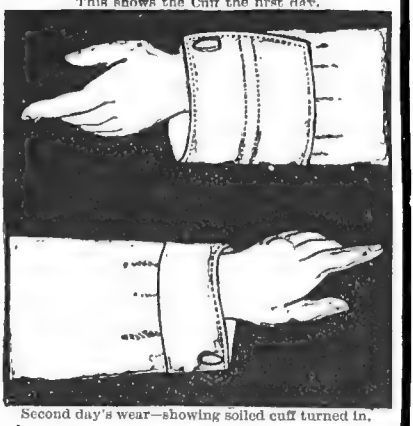

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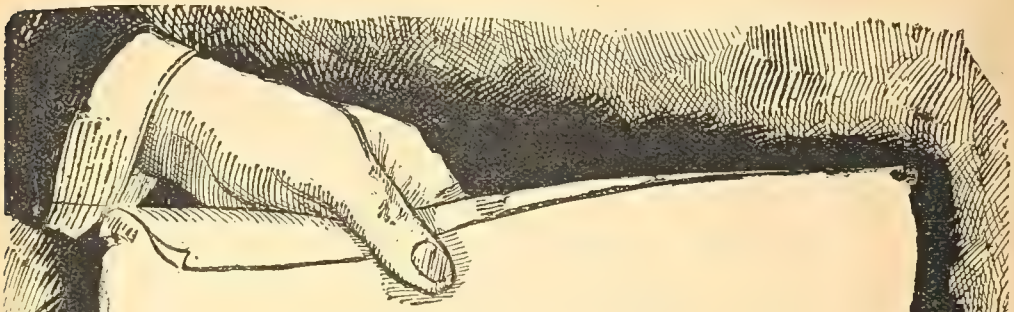

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R. M., September, 1901.

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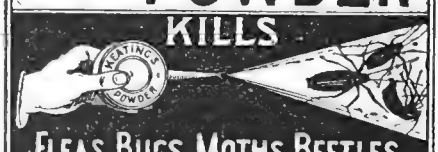

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THE ROYAL MAGAZINE.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

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The Editor will always be ready to consider contributions, whether literary or pictorial, and, where stamps are enclosed, will make every endeavour to ensure their safe return in the event of their proving unsuitable, although he cannot hold himself responsible for any MSS. or drawings or photographs sent on approval.

Cases for the first three half-yearly Volumes of THE ROYAL MAGAZINE are now ready, and can be obtained at the Publishing Office, price 1/- each, or post free 1/2.

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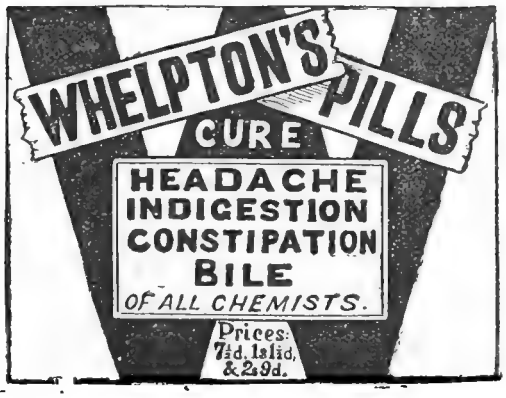

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"AYE READY."

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CHILDISH MEDITATION.

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"SIT STILL!"

The Difficult Art of . . . . Child-Photography.

By Stanley White.

Unless a photographer has something of the comedian in his composition, he had far better leave the juvenile branch of his art to those who have, for he will never get good pictures.

His repertoire in the entertaining line must be a varied one, so that he may be able at a moment's notice to do exactly the kind of "turn" demanded by his youthful and exacting audience.

Photo, Esmé Collings.

Miss Prim.

Photo, Byrne.

As Good as Gold.

Photo, Esmé Collings.

Storm and Sunshine.

A Pretty Pose.

Photo, Esmé Collings.

The tricks he may have to perform, though not so elaborate as those practised at the Egyptian Hall of Mystery—are yet not easy, inasmuch as many are necessarily extempore, and children, at least when naughty, are not less hard to please than adults, besides having an appalling way of manifesting disapproval.

It is advisable that this repertoire should include a mild form of ventriloquism, and a very fair proficiency in the art

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Photo, Lafayette.

A LADY OF THE SNOWS.

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Photo, Lafayette.

Four Years Old.

Photo, Byrne.

A Cherub.

Photo, Lafayette.

"Curly."

Photo, Campbell.

The Lord's Prayer.

of mimicry, more especially with regard to the cries of various animals familiar to children, such as "moo-cows, gee-gees, bow-wows, pussy-cats, and donkeys."

If with all this he can combine some acrobatic powers, enough to enable him to hop about on one leg for an indefinite time, he will go up by leaps and bounds in the opinions of his small critics, and then he can do with them as he likes.

Some photographers keep quite a stock of toys of all kinds to put their young clients into good humour preparatory to the important event. One large studio has a very clever, though simple, arrangement for using toys to advantage. The portion of the room allotted to photographing children is shut off

Photo, Mitchell.

The Butterfly.

Google

Photo, Speaight.

A Novel Bedfellow.

Photo, Speaight.

Bed-time.

Photo, Esmé Collings.

Surprise.

Photo, Wallace.

One of our Readers.

Photo, Esmé Collings.

Three Sisters.

from the rest by a screen, and sometimes the operator has to turn himself into a regular Punch and Judy man.

The method is to pop up toys, such as grotesque dolls, toy cats, dogs, etc., above the screen at unexpected moments, and a child must be very naughty and intractable indeed, if he fails to be captivated by the last trump card of this establishment, a fearsome effigy with the barbarous title of "The Golly-wog." One young autocrat insisted on having a photo taken of the creature to preserve as a memento of his visit.

The main thing is to make the child forget that it is in a strange place, and this can best be done by arousing its interest and curiosity. Most of the prettiest photographs of children are taken at such a moment, and everything depends upon the power of the photographer to make himself amusing, and to put himself in sympathy with the youngsters.

Some photographers, clever in all other branches, are utter failures the moment they attempt to deal with children. A man may feign politeness successfully with adults but he cannot deceive a child. It knows instinctively whether he is really a friend or not, and it is not always the best looking man that the children take to most.

The dispositions of children are manifest at a very early age, and the method that will suit one will not suit another. A tactful operator will see at a glance what kind of subject he has to deal with. It is worse than

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Photo, Richards & Co.

PRIVATE THEATRICALS.

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useless to indulge in horseplay with a timid and retiring child; the photographer should be quiet, kindly, and re-assuring, and, above all, get the picture taken as quickly as possible.

A kind gentlemanly fellow will soon get on good terms with a child of this temperament, and has only to watch his chance to catch a pleasing expression.

It is a mistake to attempt to photograph young children the moment they enter the studio. Quite half the trouble experienced is due to neglect of this rule. A child should be allowed a good run round for a quarter of an hour or so, that it may grow accustomed to its novel surroundings.

To no subject does the old proverb "Too many cooks spoil the broth," apply with greater force. Nothing is more fatal than for a lot of adults to accompany the children; one, the nurse or the mother, is quite enough.

When the photograph is actually in course of being taken the operator must be the one centre of attraction. What can he do when a child has its aunt on one side and its mother on the other, and its little head turning round first to one and then to the other in response to their well meant but ill-timed invitations "to look at the little dicky-bird," or "isn't that a pretty bow-wow?"

A great stumbling block to young children is the camera itself, and when one considers what a weird looking box of mystery it really is, this is not surprising. But out of evil the skilful man brings good, and

The Huntsman.

A Little Soldier.

"Here's to you!"

The King's Jester.

Photos, Speaight.

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Photos, Byrne.

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Photo, W. & D. Downey

A ROSEBUD.

Google

Bubbles.

A Dandy of Past Times.

Ready for the Fancy-Dress Ball.

An Adventure.

Photos, Speight.

"Mousmé."

the child is at once on excellent terms with the instrument when shown a reflection of its mother, but—upside down! It is very pretty to see the child instinctively invert its head to get the proper view.

To pretend that a pussy-cat is concealed inside the box is also a sure road to success, and here the art of mimicking pussy's well-known voice comes in.

Very often the operation is anything but plain sailing even with the most skilful operator. If something has happened to upset a child's equanimity in the studio or on the way to it, there may be a protracted struggle for the mastery. And then after every device seems to be exhausted, the mood of the small tyrant will suddenly change, and a beautiful rainbow effect—as of the sun shining through rain, will be the reward of patience.

Child photography does indeed repay all the pains and anxiety bestowed upon it. It is a labour of love. What can be more charming and elevating than to observe the pretty innocent ways of young children, free from every trace of the affectation and self-consciousness that too often mar the adult sitter?

And it may be that the picture the photographer has taken such pains to obtain will be all the parents have left of their darling child, a relic they would not part with for untold gold.

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THE AFFAIR OF THE BAL MASQUÉ

By W. S. Forster.

A party of eight were dining in one of the sumptuous hotels which have sprung into existence within the last few years in the West End of London. It seemed to be an assemblage expressly designed to provide its less noteworthy neighbours with material for comment. The men were good looking and aristocratic, the women beautiful, richly dressed, and sparkling with diamonds. The host, Lord Frederick Effingham, a good-natured young peer not burthened with too many brains, had brought his married sister, Lady Forrest, to do the honours of the table. The guests consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Vanderberg, a South African millionaire and his wife; Sir William and Lady Powell-Jones; their niece, a nice, quiet-looking girl; and a stalwart Canadian, the owner of countless miles of territory in the great tracts beyond Winnepeg.

These oddly-assorted ingredients mixed better than might have been expected. The pair from Johannesburg happened to be intelligent, besides being fabulously rich, and Mr. Julius Vanderberg found a topic after his own heart in the newly discovered gold-fields situated on the Canadian's property. Sir William Powell-Jones, a hereditary coal owner from South Wales, was secure in the knowledge that 24s. per ton f.o.b. at Cardiff was as sound a paying proposition as any quartz reef ever located. Lord Freddy had a hazy notion that in thus rubbing shoulders with the national industries he was somehow doing his duty as a member of the House of Lords; and the Canadian, Richard Fairfax by name, secretly cherished the opinion that Dorothy Temple, Sir William's niece, was the most charming girl he had met since his arrival in England. Thus far, at any rate, the human constituents of the dinner mixed well.

But the dominant note of interest was the curiosity which the three Englishwomen took in Mrs. Vanderberg. Her piquant manners, her dresses, her jewels, supplied one of the public topics of the hour. The gems in her hair rivalled the vivacious flashes of her dark eyes, and her neck and corsage were roped with diamonds. She was exquisitely gowned, and Lady Forrest soon learnt, with some inward amazement, that the new order of wealth could produce its peeresses as well as the old order of titles.

In a word, the dinner was a success. Its delicious cookery, its rare wines, its pleasant music, its aroma of wealth, health, and happiness, made up ingredients from which it must have been difficult to concoct a failure.

The party sat late. Modern laxity permits women to enjoy the scent of tobacco, but Mrs. Vanderberg knew her acquaintances well enough to avoid even the hint that, under favourable circumstances, she would have been the first to light a cigarette.

Lord Freddy took advantage of a pause in the conversation to announce the evening's programme.

"I have two boxes reserved at the Empire," he said, "when we care to go there. We have supper at the Savoy subsequently, and then, to make a night of it, I have a proposal that you may like to fall in with."

"Your idea and ours of 'making a night of it' may differ, Freddy," said his sister.

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"Well, the final decision rests with you, you know. But I have secured a large double box at the fancy dress ball. It seemed to me that an hour or two there might amuse you."

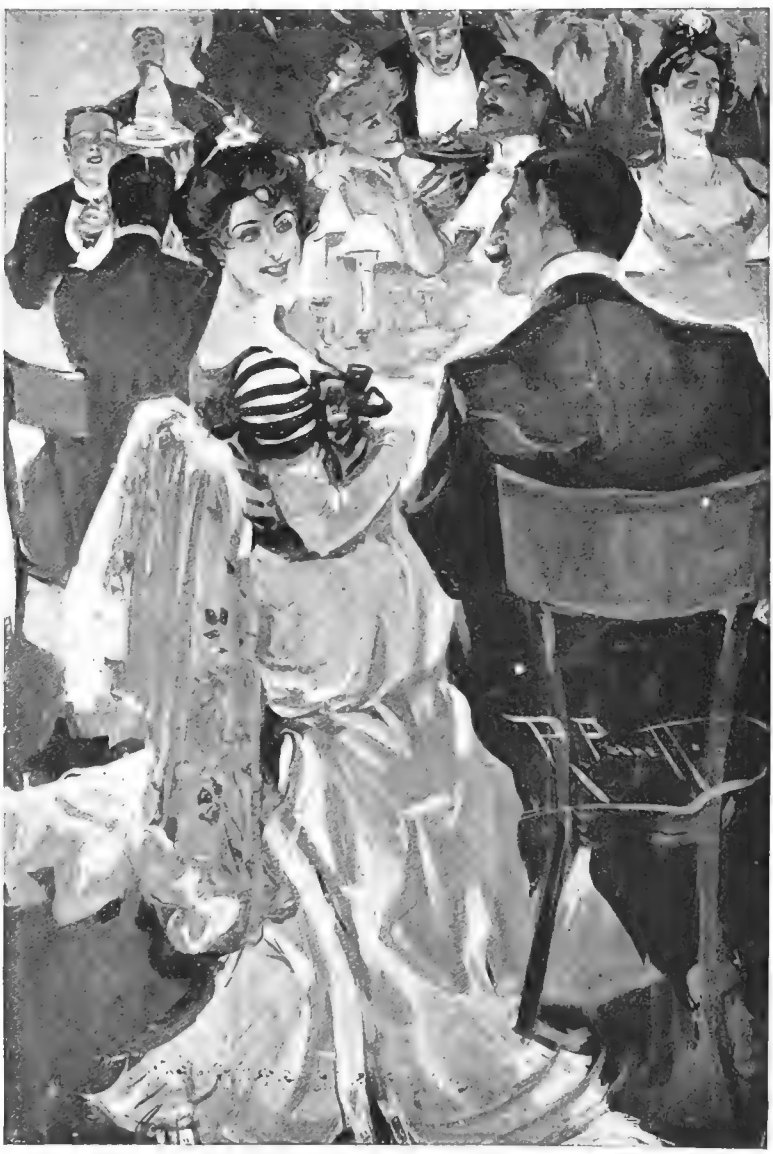
Lady Forrest looked at the baronet's wife, and Mrs. Vanderberg, quicker than the others to analyse the hidden thought, cried: "Oh, won't that be jolly? I have never seen a public *bal masqué*, and they tell me it is one of the sights of London."

Her husband quietly suffocated himself with a mouthful of smoke, but none noticed him, as the colliery proprietor broke in: "I suppose there is no harm in looking on at these things, but —er—is it advisable for ladies to wear diamonds on such occasions?"

"The Savoy people will take care of them if we wish," said Lord Effingham airily. "I have arranged for a plentiful supply of masks and dominoes. We can be shrouded from observation should that be desirable." This precaution was deemed to be sufficient, and the diamonds were not left at the Savoy.

So it turned out that the wraps were donned, and faces hidden, and the whole party found themselves in a spacious box on the second tier in the great theatre devoted for the night to the most Continental form of revelry that staid London permits.

The fascination of the glittering spectacle rapidly seized hold upon the women. Mrs. Vanderberg seemed to be akin to her surroundings. The light, colour, movement—the complete *abandon* of the butterfly crowd beneath—appealed to her imagination. She singled out special costumes for approval or criticism, and the others, except Dorothy Temple, took the keenest interest in her remarks. Truth to tell, that young lady herself might have been more inclined to examine the bewildering groups of dancers were it not that her ears were filled to the exclusion of her eyes. For Dick Fairfax



"Oh, won't that be jolly? I have never seen a public *bal masqué*."

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was making the most of his opportunities. He manœuvred with the skill of a born scout to get the pretty Dorothy into a corner of the box, and she, not unwillingly, listened to details of wild life on the plains, mixed with reminiscences of his early years in a back-woods settlement.

Several times he mentioned his sisters.

"There are other girls there in the what-do-you-call-it, the bush or the veldt, is it?" interrupted Miss Dorothy on one of these occasions.

"I suppose so," said Fairfax. "Other fellows have sisters of course. But I don't think I could tell you the names of half-a-dozen girls in the township."

"Now don't make me doubt your veracity. I have believed you implicitly thus far."

"I want you to believe me implicitly always, Miss Temple," he said with marked earnestness. "I never had eyes for any woman until I saw——" here his nerve failed him—"England."

The lame conclusion in no wise cloaked his meaning. Dorothy blushed furiously and bent over her aunt. "You all seem very preoccupied with the masquers," she said.

"My dear, it is so strange," said the older lady. "I was just admiring a handsome young Romeo, and Mrs. Vanderberg says it is a girl!"

"It is quite shocking," cried Sir William. "I suppose one must view these people just as one does the—er—people on the stage, you know."

"Yes—from the stalls," put in Lord Freddy. "I'm going to have a stroll round. Anybody coming?" He hardly waited for an answer before he left the box.

Fairfax, a man of quick thought and observant eye, imagined that his youthful lordship was not anxious for company. During the past ten minutes Effingham's opera glasses had been levelled frequently at a box opposite, on the third tier, tenanted, so far as could be seen, by a solitary masked lady, sitting half hidden by the partly drawn curtains. The Canadian smiled at the suspicion that herein, perhaps, lay the genesis of this unexpected conclusion to the evening's programme, but he did not trouble his mind further with the thought, as Miss Temple, more self-possessed now, but a trifle constrained in manner, turned to him with some trivial remark.

A knock at the door of the box heralded a waiter, a foreigner polite and deferential. "Milord has sent iced coffee for the ladies. There is a card for Mr. Vanderberg."

The South African magnate adjusted his eyeglasses, scrutinised the paste-board, and murmured his astonishment. It bore no lithographed name—only a message. "Come round to Box 'E,' ground floor, for a moment. Bring Sir William Powell-Jones with you.—Du Barry."

"I didn't know Viscount Du Barry was here," he said. "I wonder where Box 'E' is. Will you come, Sir William?"

"Certainly." And they went out.

"Men are all alike," laughed Lady Forrest. "They only need an excuse to get a nearer look at the dancers. You are the exception, Mr. Fairfax."

"I am more than satisfied, Lady Forrest," he replied, resting his hand on the back of Dorothy's chair.

He chanced to note that the veiled lady opposite now quitted her box. He would have striven to engross Miss Temple's attention again had not the waiter re-appeared.

"Lord Effingham sends his compliments, sir," he said, "and will you join him in the *foyer* for a moment?" The man then deftly picked up the tray of iced coffee, which had been left untouched, and handed the cups to the ladies.

"You, too, have fallen, Mr. Fairfax," said Mrs Vanderberg quizzically.

He was annoyed at the interruption, but he could find no valid reason to refuse, so he answered lightly. "My host must be responsible. Anyhow, I will go and see what he wants."

The ladies drank their coffee, which was soothing to the taste in the hot atmosphere of the theatre. The waiter stood with his tray to receive their cups, so they swallowed the liquid rapidly. Then the man stepped to the front of the box, saying to Lady Forrest:

"Will your ladyship permit me to draw the curtains back a little? They are hanging over the side and they might chance to catch fire."

The request seemed to be a natural one, though a moment's thought would have shown its absurdity, as the globes beneath contained electric lights. Without waiting for permission the waiter pulled both curtains sharply together. At the same instant, unnoticed by the ladies, two men in evening dress, wearing masks, entered the box. They each sprang to a side, thus bringing one of them between Lady Powell-Jones and Dorothy, and the other between Lady Forrest and Mrs Vanderberg.

In both hands they held large sponges.

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With brutal force they flung their arms round the ladies' necks, and before a cry of alarm could be uttered, they held the sponges, saturated with a mixture of chloroform, ether, and alcohol, over the faces of their helpless victims, whilst the waiter faced about ready to assist his confederates in case one of the women should succeed in struggling effectually to free herself. Mrs. Vanderberg or Dorothy might have done so, but the waiter struck each of them savagely just below the throat, and in an incredibly short time the powerful anæsthetic had done its work. The whole four were limp and inanimate in the arms of their assailants.

The two newcomers spoke in French. "All is well, Pierre," said one. "Before that dose passes off the drug will have made itself felt."

"No mistakes, eh, Gaston? They are not poisoned?"

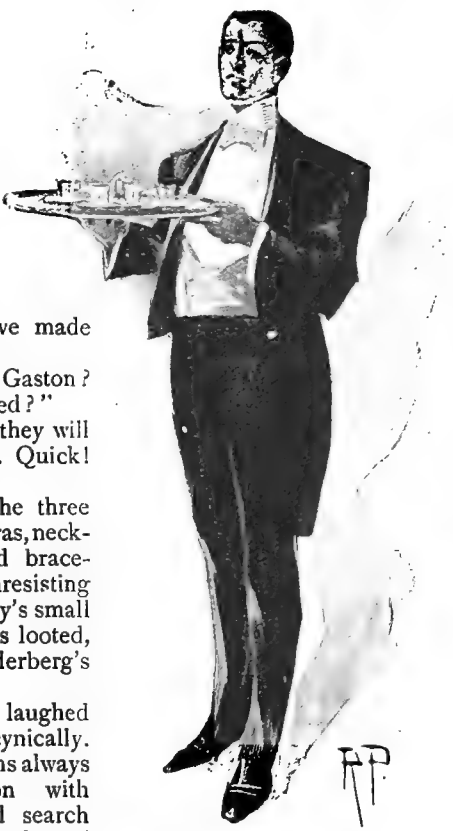
"No, idiot. But they will not recover for hours. Quick! The diamonds!"

With deft hands the three thieves unclasped tiaras, necklaces, brooches, and bracelets from the unresisting forms. Even Dorothy's small store of jewellery was looted, and then Mrs. Vanderberg's pockets searched.

"I thought so," laughed one of the two cynically. "These South Africans always carry some bullion with them," for his rapid search brought to light a packet of banknotes. Mrs. Vanderberg had imagined that it was possible the dinner might terminate with a game at poker. She was equipped for the fray, and prepared to play a losing game if necessary.

A minute had sufficed for the whole dramatic episode to unfold itself. At its close the position stood thus. Lord Effingham was talking airily to an unknown and unrecognisable woman in the corridor on the third floor, Mr. Vanderberg and Sir William Powell-Jones were wondering why Viscount Du Barry had sent for them, as he received their visit with a cordiality that seemed to regard their presence as unexpected, Fairfax was vainly scrutinising the crowd in the *foyer* in his search for Effingham, the four ladies were lying insensible in their chairs, and the thieves were quietly quitting the box.

Fairfax did not long pursue his quest. Having done all that politeness required, he hastened back to the second floor. He now discovered, to his annoyance, that he did not know the number of Lord Effingham's box, and he lost nearly a minute before he could find an attendant. The man preceded him to the door, which he threw open, and then the extraordinary spectacle that met their eyes so astonished them that neither could speak for an instant. The Canadian was the first to recover his senses.



"Milord has sent iced coffee for the ladies."

"Great Heavens!" he cried. "These ladies have been attacked and robbed, perhaps murdered." He sprang to Dorothy and took her inert form in his arms. The strong scent of the anæsthetic still lingered on her lips and nostrils, but her laboured breathing showed that she lived, though absolutely unconscious.

"Call for immediate help," said Fairfax to the attendant. "Bring the manager, a doctor if possible, and the police. Quick, man! This may be a matter of life or death. In any case, thousands of pounds worth of diamonds have been stolen."

Stirred into activity by his words, the attendant ran off, sought the aid of two others, and, by scouring the house in all directions, they succeeded in producing the manager and two detectives, whilst the former secured the good offices of a medical friend who happened to be present.

Whilst Fairfax rapidly detailed all he knew, the doctor examined his unconscious patients. He instantly recognised the nature of the agent used to render them insensible, and when he heard Fairfax allude to the coffee he picked up one of the cups from the tray and smelt and tasted its contents.

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"They have been drugged also," he said. "I can guess the nature of the drug, but analysis will show this later. Meanwhile the ladies must be removed to a more suitable place, and undressed. Perhaps some of the female staff of the theatre may have had hospital experience."

Mr. Vanderberg and Sir William Powell-Jones now put in an appearance, the South African having become suspicious, when a direct question to the astonished Viscount showed that he had not sent any message to him; he did not even know of his presence.

In the midst of the fresh torrent of explanations and horror-stricken words Lord Effingham arrived. He was perfectly dazed when he learned what had happened.

"Why, my sister wore our family diamonds," he gasped. "They cannot be replaced. But what matters a few bits of glass? Is she in any danger?"

"No danger whatever," was the reply. "A considerable nervous shock, no doubt, but no danger."

The detectives meanwhile were busily engaged in ferreting out all possible information. They were specially anxious to obtain a description of the man who so skilfully usurped the waiter's functions, and in this respect Fairfax was able to give them a tolerably correct idea of the thief's appearance.

The attendants at the exit could not say anything definite. Several ladies and gentlemen had driven off during the past hour, and the departures were momentarily becoming more numerous. But no one in the uniform of an attendant had left the theatre, and all other exits were closed and locked.

"I'm afraid, gentlemen," said the detective who had just spoken, "that we can do nothing until the ladies recover sufficiently to tell us how they were robbed and how many people were concerned in the affair. It is obvious that one man could not overpower four women unaided. There were accomplices. Can you give us an accurate description of the stolen diamonds?"

Lord Effingham and Sir William were vague in this respect, but Mr. Julius Vanderberg catalogued his wife's gems with the skill of a pawnbroker's assistant.

An inquiry sent to the doctor elicited the information that none of his patients could possibly answer any questions until the next forenoon.

After lingering for weary hours at the entrance the party decided that the thieves must have made their escape before the robbery was even discovered, and they broke up, the police having long since arranged for the chief railway stations to be watched by men furnished with full details as to the waiter's description.

Lord Effingham and Fairfax travelled west in the peer's carriage. When they were alone the Colonial suddenly said to his companion: "Who was the lady whom you went to see in the box on the third tier?"

Effingham blushed furiously, for the question was unexpected. "A friend," he replied shortly.

"No doubt, but this is a serious matter, Effingham, and I think you should be more explicit."

"Why?"

"Because, in reviewing the circumstances by which we all four were led to leave the women unprotected, I have been impressed by the fact that you went first, and voluntarily, to meet that person, and the thieves seem to have planned that it should be so."

"She could not have had anything to do with the affair."

"Then you refuse to tell me?"

"No, old chap, I don't. But for Heaven's sake let the woman be kept clear of this wretched business."

"By all means, if it be possible."

"Well, she—she is a French lady, the Comtesse de Brissac."

"Where does she live?"

"In a flat near Knightsbridge."

"Let us go there."

"In the name of goodness, why?"

"Because I want to question her."

"Really, Fairfax——"

"It is a choice between me and the police."

"Very well. We will go. Of course, you understand that I strongly resent your attitude in this matter."

Fairfax made no reply, and his lordship angrily directed his coachman to their new destination.

It was no easy matter to gain admission to Madame's flat. When at last a sleepy maid had been aroused she brought back from her mistress a point-blank refusal to see either Lord Effingham or his friend at that hour. Fairfax had counted upon this, and played his final card. He wrote on the back of an envelope:

"You must either see us or be arrested forthwith."

The message produced a tangle-haired, tea-gowned, pretty Frenchwoman, who promptly stormed at Lord Effingham for

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allowing her to be insulted in such wise. Was he, then, a lunatic or a keeper of lunatics? Fairfax, not to be deterred, told her in curt phrase that she was wasting valuable time. If she gave prompt information leading to the arrest of her accomplices perhaps the law might—— "

"Accomplices! In what, my faith?" screamed the Comtesse.

Fairfax briefly described the facts of the robbery so far as they were known to him. Although he constantly alluded to the men as working in collusion with her, even he could not fail to see Madame's growing amazement. She gasped interjections and laughed hysterically.

"I will meet any agent of the police," she cried at length. "I will say everything, but do not be so foolish as to imagine that I am connected with this crime. Lord Effingham knows as much about it as I do."

The peer smiled feebly in protest.

"Yes, it is so, I tell you," with an impatient stamp of her foot. "Did we not dine at the Café Rouge last Friday? Was it not there that you promised me a sight of your sister and the rich woman, Mrs. Vanderberg? Did you not then make all the arrangements and telephone for my box at the same time? You are a fool, boy! If I were a confidante of these—these thieves, would I remain here to be arrested at the first moment you were able to think of my name?"

Fairfax explained that it was he, and not Effingham, who had insisted on the visit. She tossed her head defiantly. "I might have known it," she said. "He has no brains, this youth. Let me think. Let me think!"

Summarily dismissing the implied purpose of their presence, she lit a cigarette, and puffed vigorously at it in silence for some minutes.

"You have told no one, you?" she said, suddenly transfixing Lord Effingham.

"Not a soul," he blurted out.

"Then only one man living could possibly know of your intentions. Plenty of people knew about the boxes, but only one about the party of guests you were to bring."

"And he was?" cried Fairfax.

The Comtesse de Brissac pursed her lips into a very pleasing smile as she answered: "I will deny myself the luxury of revenge for your insults. The man I suspect is a Gascon waiter at the Café Rouge. He is easily found. He serves the tables at the extreme left of the Salon Dorée. He is a Gascon among many Swiss and Italians. You cannot miss him. He may be innocent, but he *could* have overheard our conversation. Now, go!"

Fairfax could not deny the reasonableness of the lady's attitude, and it really seemed that she had provided them with a tangible clue. When they left the house Lord Freddy admitted that her statements were perfectly accurate so far as the origin of the party was concerned, and the Colonial rapidly came to the conclusion that further developments had better be left to Scotland Yard. At ten o'clock he told the whole story to the detective in charge of the case, and, at mid-day, that officer lunched at the Café Rouge in company with a frivolous and golden-haired young lady. He quickly identified the Gascon waiter mentioned by the Comtesse de Brissac. The man was pale and tired. He had been up late.

During the afternoon the detective called on Fairfax. "Would you care to see a Soho club raided to-night, sir?" he said with a professional smile.

"Why? Have you any news?"

"Nothing definite. The Café Rouge waiter frequents this club, and it is a nest of wrong 'uns. To-night we will raid the place in such force that none of its inmates can escape. They will all be then thoroughly searched and questioned. If they are not connected with the robbery, they will nevertheless be convicted and fined for running a disorderly club. If our birds are there we will have our hands on them, and they will not suspect the real cause."

So it came to pass that when London streets were quieting down after the bustle of the midnight hour, the Gascon waiter was shadowed from the Café Rouge to the Cercle Sociale where a select coterie of Continental gentlemen of his class were wont to foregather after the day's work had ended. Immediately parties of strongly built men in twos and threes sauntered about the locality, and placed themselves in strategic positions both back and front of the club, for the police gained access to the rear through the house which abutted on the premises from the next street.

Fairfax, of course, was only a spectator, and was warned not to show himself, so he kept in the shadow of a doorway and watched developments with interest. At the preconcerted hour a police inspector and several uniformed constables came quickly to the main entrance of the club and demanded admission. This was refused. The door was burst open, there was a scuffle, a rush

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Parties of men in twos and threes sauntered about the locality.

into the interior, a turning out of lights and general pandemonium.

But no one escaped. Fairfax, gazing at the door from across the narrow street, was wild with desire to follow the police and take a hand in the row, had not his instructions positively forbidden any such action. It was well that he restrained himself. Whilst the turmoil within was in full swing he suddenly heard a window flung open on the fourth floor, and a man's gesticulating figure dimly appeared. At once another window was opened in the opposite house, but this, from his position, Fairfax could not see.

Some few broken, eager words were exchanged, and, to his intense amazement, the Colonial could quite clearly see a small black handbag travelling rapidly, in a straight line, from the window of the club to its opposite neighbour. The bag was not thrown, for the feat would be difficult and uncertain. It seemed to follow the line of an invisible wire, and to be hauled along this guide by some human agent.

It disappeared, both windows were closed after a very slight delay, and the incident ended. Fairfax did not know what to do. His friend the detective might be seriously annoyed if he called out some of the police in the club, yet this seemed to be the only possible course. He was about to cross the street and tell the constables on guard at the door what he had seen, when the front door of the house into which the bag had vanished was suddenly opened.

A tall, slight man, closely muffled, and carrying the identical bag itself, or one strangely like it, appeared. He closed the door and turned to make off when Fairfax, who had approached him unperceived, seized the handle of the bag and a part of the man's hand in a fierce grasp, saying loudly: "What have you got in that bag?"

The stranger gave a yelp of dismay, wrenched his hand free, and ran off at top speed, leaving the Colonial in victorious possession of the mysterious bag. It chanced that, at this moment, the detective emerged from the club. He noticed the slight scuffle, and ran across the street.

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"What is the matter?" he cried when he recognised Fairfax.

The other one told him as briefly as possible, and exhibited his prize.

"Open it," cried the detective. "Here, Tom, lend a light," and a policeman's lantern threw its rays over the bag. It was locked, but a vigorous tug tore the fastenings from the canvas side. Within, wrapped in cotton wool, were diamond ornaments galore, apparently the whole proceeds of the robbery. The detective used several sorts of strong language while he ran to summon aid to break into the second house, as all knocking and ringing were disregarded. At last an entry was effected, but the place was quite empty, the only find being a quantity of wire and string in the front room on the fourth floor, showing how the transit of the booty had been achieved.

The sequel, too, was curious. Not a shred of additional evidence could be obtained. The ladies failed to identify any of the thirty-eight men arrested, nor could the other members of the party help them to recognise the *soi-disant* waiter, so the police assumed that he was the man who had escaped during the struggle for the bag. The law was not cheated, however. Having a very shrewd suspicion as to the real culprits out of the thirty-eight prisoners, Scotland Yard sent their photographs to Paris and other centres, with the result that the Gascon waiter and three others were extradited on various charges.

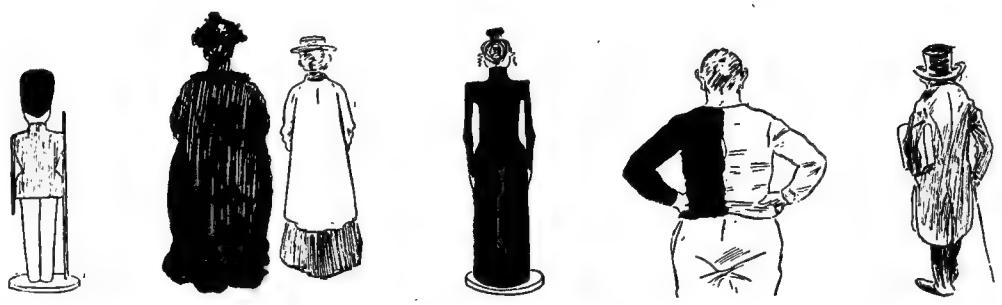
The gang of Continental thieves thus broken up was the most expert confederacy known to the police during many years. The two principal members were, at one time, prominent members of society, and they used their knowledge of the ways and manners of the *beau monde* to further their ends.

Once in possession of Lord Effingham's intention to bring a party to the *bal masqué*, the rest of their scheme was daringly simple. They hired a neighbouring box in which to prepare for the adventure at the last moment, and cleverly utilised every artifice to get the other gentlemen out of the way the moment Lord Effingham went to visit his friend the Comtesse, an incident they foresaw must happen, and which they would have forced had Effingham delayed it until too late an hour. The rest was easy, and they would not have attempted to dispose of the diamonds until the event had long blown over.

Fairfax soon afterwards gave a dinner at the same hotel to the same company. It was a dual celebration of the recovery of the diamonds—which, by the way, were complete and uninjured—and his engagement with Miss Dorothy Temple.

Lord Effingham sent a handsome bangle, as a peace offering, to the Comtesse de Brissac. She accepted the gift, but declined to receive him. "Your acquaintance is too risky, my dear Freddy," she wrote. "I object to your manners and your associates. Visits at 5 a.m., and friends who call me a thief the moment they see me, are unusual and bad for the nerves. So, good-bye."

WHAT'S IN A BACK?



Read the article on "Characteristic Backs" in the August Number of THE LADY'S MAGAZINE and you will learn.

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SOLDIERS OF THE KAISER

About the German Army and Its Customs.

By Sydney Williams.

The first thing that an Englishman notices on entering a German barracks and seeing for the time German soldiers at their drill or practising with sword, lance or bayonet, is the methodical, half-mechanical way in which everything is done. It may almost be said to constitute the great difference between the results of the system of voluntary service as seen in the British army and those of conscription in vogue in Germany.

In this country, when a man enters the army, he does so with the intention of following the profession of arms for at least several years. Not so in Germany; service in the army is there regarded as a necessary evil, and a man serves his time with resignation rather than with willingness, and certainly altogether without any feeling of patriotic enthusiasm. Moreover, nearly every man has ambitions for a civil career, to begin when his years of service are over; and therefore his heart is never in his work while in the army.

The system, too, under which he is trained does not conduce to the growth of individual intelligence; its tendency is rather to stamp out individualities and make each man a mere cog in a vast machine. Implicit obedience, then, not only to the spirit but even to the letter of military law is an essential in the German army.

A few years ago this might have been regarded as a sign of strength; just at present, however, with the object lesson of the war in South Africa before our eyes, this is not likely to be the general verdict. The power of the individual to think and to act for himself is a growing factor in successful military organisation, and a large army composed of mere military machines might easily go under to an army half its size if composed of intelligent men, able to form a sensible judgment,

Photo lent by C. P. Goery.

A dormitory in a German barracks. The hour for rising is never later than five a.m., and it is often as early as three or four. Observe the purse hung round the neck of each man: he is never allowed to be without it.

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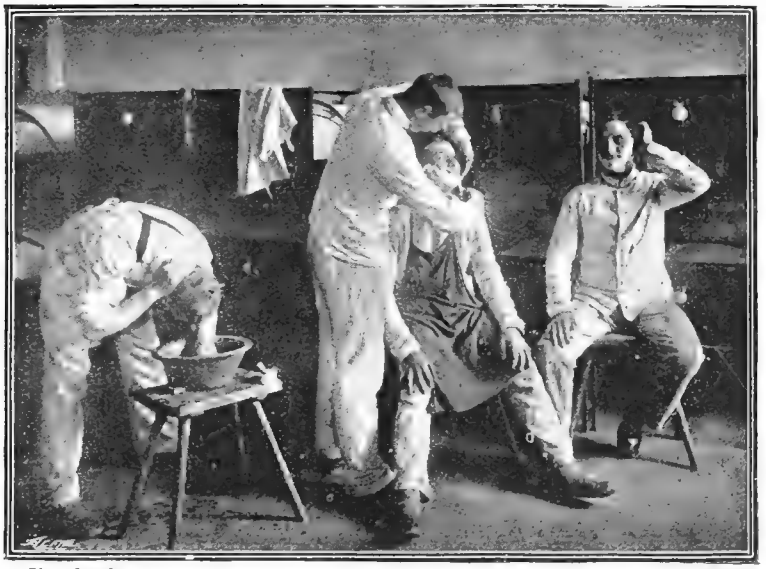

Photo lent by C. P. Goery.
No man is allowed to appear at drill or to go on duty unshaven. The men, therefore, have to shave each other.

and to act on it in a practical and useful manner.

Every German must serve in the army if he be physically fit—and not many are rejected by the doctors. No substitutes are allowed, and the age at which liability to service commences is seventeen. The usual age, however, at which a man is called up for service is twenty, and he must serve for six years if in the infantry, or seven if in the cavalry or artillery.

If in the infantry, he serves two years in a regiment, and the rest of the time in the reserve; and if he is in the cavalry or artillery, three years in the regiment and four in the reserve.

Should, however, a boy be able to pass a specified examination on entering the army, and provided his parents are able to support him during his year of service, he may become a *freiwillige* and has to serve for one year only.

His position is superior to that of the common soldier, and corresponds roughly to that of our non-commissioned officers; and it may be stated with a fair degree of certainty that it is the ambition of every German to become a *freiwillige*, which, by the way, seems to be rather a misnomer, as it literally means volunteer. But the pay is altogether inadequate to provide even for the most modest wants of an officer.

Therefore, as was stated before, it is necessary that a boy's parents should be able to make him a considerable allowance, not only to provide him with a few of the luxuries of life, but even with the necessities.

The officers in most British regiments do not consider their pay sufficient, and in some it certainly is not sufficient to enable them to live in the fashionable style they affect. In Germany a major-general receives a salary of just under £37 a month—less than half that of his British colleague. Other officers are even worse paid; a second lieutenant, for instance, receives only £4 a month, or about £50 a year—a wage at which an ordinary artisan might well turn up his nose, and at

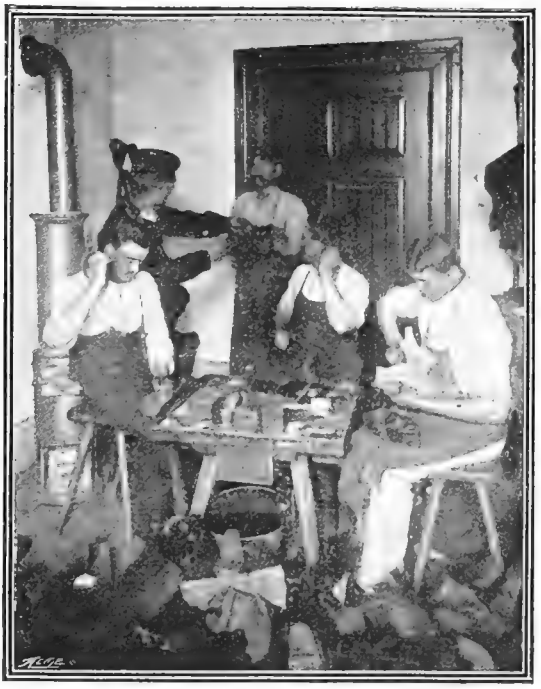

Photo lent by C. P. Goery.
The cobbler's shop. All repairs to boots, clothing, and so on, are done by the men who were cobblers and tailors in civil life.

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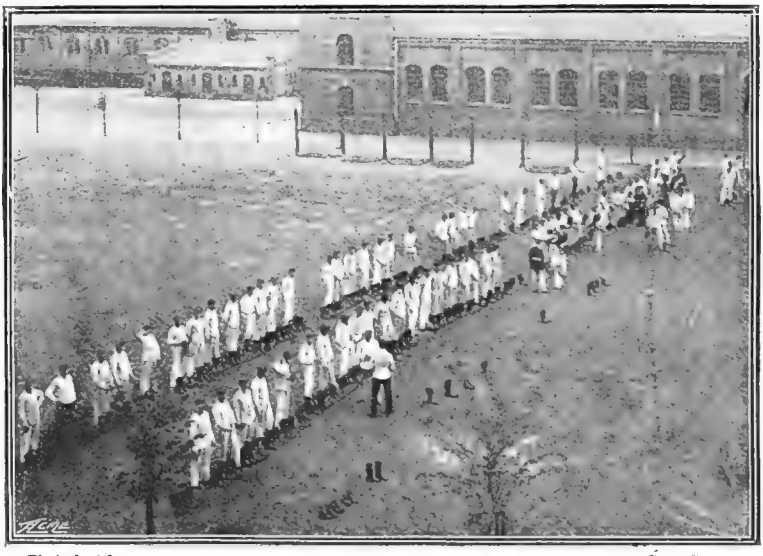

Photo lent by C. P. Goory.

A boot inspection is held weekly. The men standing at the end of the back row have not kept their boots in proper repair, and have consequently been singled out for punishment.

the mere mention of which a coal-miner would certainly go on strike.

But economy is a great point in Germany, and this is the case not only in the payment of the officers but also of the men. In the latter case, of course, the authorities have legislated to make service compulsory for all; they can, therefore, pay them as poorly as they please, and, in point of fact, they do.

The pay of a common soldier is $4\frac{1}{2}d.$ a day, but out of this he must pay $1\frac{1}{4}d.$ for his dinner. The only free rations given out are a loaf of black bread with coffee or soup, so that it will be seen that most of the German soldier's pay has to go in buying food.

One might think that the men would be at least allowed to spend their princely wage as they like; but the authorities have decreed otherwise, and from time to time the soldiers are ordered to produce the bag in which they keep their money; and if it be found that any man has been extravagant and has been squandering his pay on riotous living, he is punished.

In Britain we treat children of tender years thus, but in Germany it seems to be necessary or at any rate, to be considered necessary, to look after grown men in the same way.

And everywhere the men are hemmed in by endless rules and regulations, many of which seem almost farcical to us. But in Germany they are taken seriously; and it is just as well for the men that they are; for the least transgression of any of the ordinances is attended with certain punishment. Most, if not all, of these

Photo lent by C. P. Goory.

In this illustration the young conscripts are being instructed by an officer how to clean their rifles. This has to be done every time the rifle is used.

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ordinances, of course serve some definite purpose which is generally apparent but not always important.

There is a regulation, for instance, providing that every man must wear an apron at his meals. The obvious reason for this is to prevent him from soiling his uniform. Cleanliness and neatness are insisted upon to such a degree that they have become a perfect mania with the authorities. A long and comprehensive list of regulations provides against any breach of these items of discipline, and woe betide the soldier who offends in the slightest particular.

No matter how early in the morning the command "*Aufstehen*" (get up) goes forth—and it is not infrequently at three or four o'clock—the men must be scrupulously neat when they emerge from their dormitories. The German soldier must not go on duty unshaven, so the men often act as barbers to one another.

Photo lent by C. P. Goery.
The barrack walls are decorated with various decorative devices, and with the dates of German victories "to raise the patriotic ardour of the soldiers."

A good deal of this insistence on neatness is economical, "a stitch in time saves nine" apparently being the guiding motto. Care of the boots is given a foremost place of attention. Every week the boots are subjected to inspection by a sergeant or an officer. The phrase "fair wear and tear" has no place in German official vocabulary. A very strong distinction is drawn between "tear" and "wear" at these weekly inspections. Those dejected-looking men at the far end of the back row are in disgrace, because it is deemed that the defects in their footgear are the result of their own carelessness; or perhaps their boots have not been properly greased, or do not come up to the standard of polish. At any rate, they will be punished a good deal more severely than the gravity of the offence seems to warrant, the idea probably being, as Voltaire has it, "to encourage the others." The faulty boots are at once packed off to the cobbler's shop, where they are attended to by men who were bootmakers by trade in civil life, and who yearn, no doubt, to become bootmakers again at a not very distant period.

The importance of keeping the rifle thoroughly clean is most carefully impressed on the young soldier. If the interior of the barrel does not receive careful attention, it becomes foul and soon spoils. After every firing lesson, and whenever the gun has been used, cleaning is carried out, and the rifle both inside and outside has to be according

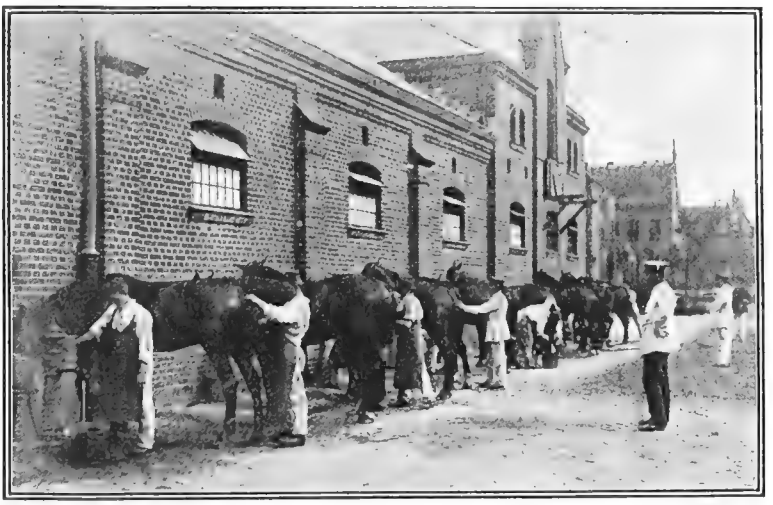

Photo lent by C. P. Goery.
As the infantryman's chief care is his rifle, the cavalryman's is his horse. It has to be carefully groomed and kept scrupulously neat and tidy.

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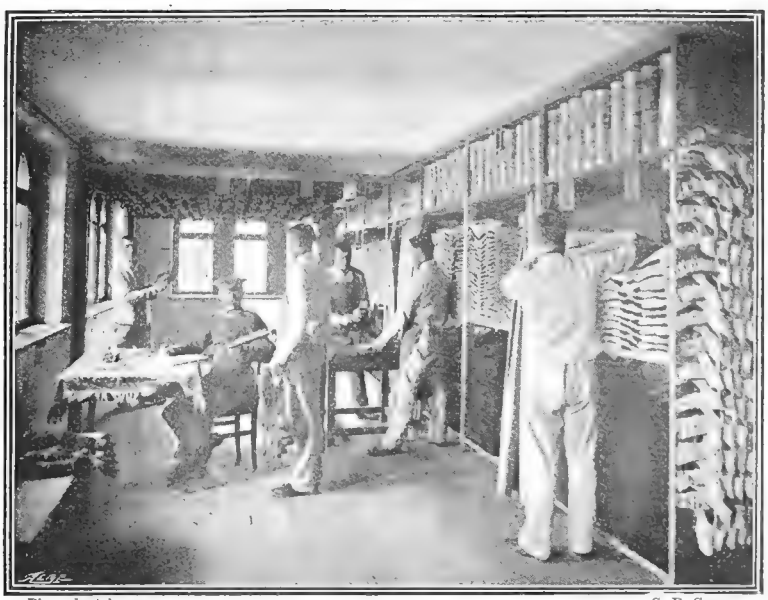

Photo lent by C. P. Goery.

A sub-officer is appointed to look after the stores of each company. He has to give an exact account of everything handed over to him.

to regulations. After an inspection of the weapons, if a soldier's rifle should happen to be dirty or improperly cleaned, he has to work at it until it is spotless, and in addition he has to undergo some form of punishment.

Military ardour, as has been before mentioned, is not a natural characteristic of the German. Some attempt, however, is made to stimulate it by wall decorations in barracks. This artistic treatment of corridors may be said to be one of the very few departures from the stern frugality of the life of the German soldier. The painter of a company takes great pride in his work, and spends many hours enriching the barrack walls with floral designs and proverbs, interspersed with the date of German victories.

To the infantry soldier his rifle is the first consideration; with the cavalryman his horse stands before all else. In this, of course, the German army is at one with all others, except that the cavalryman carries with him to the stables the same exacting code of regulations that is in force everywhere else.

Every afternoon there is an hour appointed for what is known as "cleaning drill." Here every man is afforded an opportunity of preparing his clothing and accoutrements for the scrutiny of the next morning.

If a man, after a course of such training, cannot fall into good habits, there remains no further hope for him in this world. As a matter of fact, the most slovenly from sheer necessity soon become models, and in this fact no small compensation is found for the time lost to civil life.

Each company has its own stores, and a sub-officer to look after them. This officer is held responsible for the proper order of every item. He has to keep the accounts accurately, and report thereon to his superiors.

The German soldier is very much in the

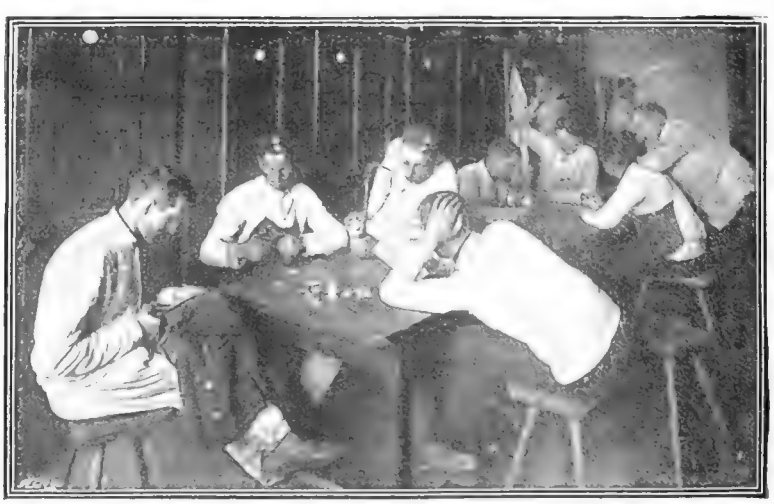

Photo lent by C. P. Goery.

In the tailors' shop, where the clothes of the soldiers are repaired.

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position of a schoolboy. Nothing is left to him. He learns his instructions off by heart, and every now and again is called upon by the sub-officer to repeat his code much in the same way that a small boy does his lesson. In the photo on page 408 are three men undergoing this ordeal. Should they be caught tripping, they are liable to pass at least three days under arrest.

Photo lent by C. P. Goery.
Cleaning drill, in which every soldier has to look to his belongings, and to see that they are all in order and presentable.

All the soldiers know very well what follows default in this respect, and they are also aware that the beds are very hard, and the rations are not too plentiful in prison. Consequently, they have no desire to make the acquaintance of "Daddy Philip," as they call the superintendent of the prison.

So much for the duties of the day.

Germans, after all, are only human, and they probably find them as irksome as we should do were we in similar case.

But it must not be supposed that life is all a bed of thorns in the army of the Kaiser. There are times, even there, when life seems worth living, and the hardship and monotony of the daily routine pales into insignificance.

Such must certainly be the case when the word is given by the officer "Essen Holen" (fetch the rations). That cry must ever reverberate gratefully in German ears; and, as the hungry Teuton dons his apron and marches with what speed he may to the dining hall, no doubt all claims of Fatherland and militarism and an ambitious sovereign are forgotten, while those of the inner man are attended to with exemplary thoroughness.

Photo lent by C. P. Goery.
The guard-room where the soldiers off duty spend their leisure. Here they may read, play games, talk, and have refreshments, but they must not go out of the room without permission.

There are other times in the day when the German soldier may snatch a few minutes' recreation. To be sure, he often has to pass these in the guard-room under the watchful eye of an officer, from whom he has to obtain permission before going out. As a set off against this, he may here indulge, if he likes, in light refresh-

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ments, or he may read, play at some game, or talk.

Sometimes, however, he is allowed to leave the barracks; then he is pretty certain to pay a visit, with some civilian friends, to a "beer garden." It might be expected that he would find pride and delight in expatiating to all who would listen on the glory of a soldier's—or rather a conscript's—life. But he does not. As a matter of fact, he finds much more pleasure in telling his friends and acquaintances how, the year after next, he is going to leave the army, adopt some civil calling, and live in a place undisturbed by the alarums that seem necessary to military glory. That is, perhaps, the natural ambition of the German conscript. At first he may find pleasure in reflecting that he is a member of the army of the third greatest power in the world. But after a time this thought loses its power to comfort; and, no doubt, he sometimes wishes that the Kaiser had not such high military ambitions, and that he, himself, might have been allowed to become a harmless, but necessary, waiter in a London restaurant, or something equally prosaic on the soil of his Fatherland.

It is one of the most interesting military problems of the day, as to how the German army would fare in a great European war. The enormous strides made during the past twenty years in arms of precision may be said to have so revolutionised modern warfare that it is open to question whether the tactics so successfully employed in 1870 against the French would be applicable in the dawn of the twentieth century.

Perfect discipline and organisation are of course indispensable now as then, but if the struggle in Africa has taught anything, it is that individual genius and enterprise are as great factors as in the days of the first Napoleon. However, their present system, mechanical though it is, would seem to be the best possible for the German army.

The Germans are not born fighters like the Irish and French. Never in the whole course of their history have they produced a military genius worthy to rank with the Titans of the world. They have never had a Hannibal, a Napoleon, or a Wellington, and but few to rank with the Napoleonic generals. The Kaiser understands the genius of his nation, and recognises that the application of scientific principles to the army is Germany's greatest safeguard.

As in most Continental armies the German officer must always appear in uniform; and in time of peace, as well as of war, his profession is everything. The officers are worked as hard as the men. Up at five o'clock in the morning they get through half a day's work before the ordinary citizen rises from slumber.

Officers of all grades are held in enormous respect by civilians, and they have a way of enforcing it in such a manner as would not be tolerated in England.

In the British army much of the detail and preliminary training is left to the non-commissioned officers. This is not so in Germany—the commissioned officer is never far off. It is quite a familiar sight on a German drill-ground to see the commissioned officer delivering a lecture to the men.

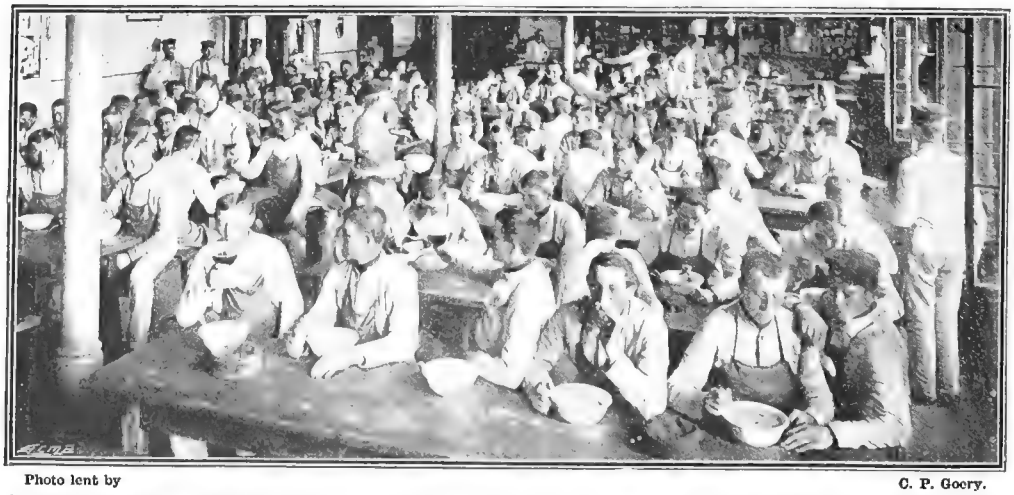

Photo lent by C. P. Goery.

A company at dinner. Every man has to wear an apron; it is also enacted by the regulations that he must wash his hands and brush his hair before sitting down to eat.

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THE PROFESSOR'S WIFE

By R. Neish.

Author of "A World in a Garden," "The Brown Girls," etc., etc.

"I fear it is merely an unusually large specimen of a Necrophorus or burying beetle," said Professor Henning slowly. He spoke half to himself and half to his sister. She sniffed audibly.

"I never heard of such a thing, and I don't know the meaning of these outlandish Latin names," she snapped.

There was a moment's pause, and Miss Henning's thin face hardened with sudden determination.

"Alec," she said sharply, "will you take your mind for one moment off those unpleasant objects"—she shuddered slightly—"and give me your attention. I wish to speak to you."

There was something so unusually discordant about her voice, which was at no time a musical one, that it caused the Professor to turn round in his chair and look at her in some amazement. He had stood all his life more or less in awe of her, and she had kept both himself and his house in order until the time of his marriage.

He had only been married a year, and was devotedly attached to his young wife, but Miss Henning greatly disapproved of the match, which, she said, had broken up her home. Although Mrs. Henning had always treated her not only with the greatest consideration, but with deference and respect, they had seen very little of her—indeed it was only at her sister-in-law's earnest entreaty that Miss Henning had condescended to spend a few weeks with them this summer.

She had been about three weeks in the house, but neither had her manner nor her heart softened towards Mrs. Henning. If the Professor noticed her coldness he wisely ignored it, feeling sure that his wife's sweetness would in time bring its own gentle reward.

"Well, Amelia, what is it?"

"Alec," she said sternly, and the cold face grew colder, and the hard voice became harder and more rasping, "it is all very well to follow a profession, and quite right to endeavour to excel in it, whether you are a lawyer—or a professor—or a——"

"A preacher?" suggested the Professor smiling.

"I am not joking," she replied stiffly, and continued her lecture even more sharply. "I say, it is as well to try and excel in whatever profession you have elected to follow, but it is not well to go about the world blind and

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deaf, and trusting and unobservant, as some people do," she added in a voice of deep meaning.

"As a good many people do, I fear," agreed the Professor pleasantly.

To say that Miss Henning smiled were to grossly exaggerate; her thin lips merely widened a little.

"I am glad you agree with me," she said with something dimly approaching geniality.

"And who is it whom you consider to be so greatly wanting in powers of observation?" asked her brother politely, but with some indifference.

"Yourself, of course," replied Miss Henning, sharply. "Whom else do you suppose I have been talking at all this time?"

"I was unaware, Amelia, that you were talking at anybody," said the Professor, mildly. "If you have been addressing yourself to me, and have any complaints to make about the absence of my powers of observation, it would surely be better to speak frankly to me rather than covertly at me."

She glanced half defiantly towards him, then said slowly: "Alec, I think it is quite time that your eyes were opened, and I intend to open them."

The Professor opened his eyes very wide indeed, and raised his eyebrows, but only said quietly: "Really? In what way, Amelia?"

"I do not consider," said Miss Henning harshly, "that it is either advisable or seemly that your wife—who is very young and greatly wanting in common-sense," the Professor started and frowned angrily, "and who is greatly wanting in common-sense," she repeated in emphasis, "should encourage so openly the constant visits and attentions of Mr. Allingham. He is always here on some pretext or another, and he is a very fast young man, absolutely devoid, I have no doubt, both of honour or scruples. His friendship with anyone as thoughtless as Mabel can only bring trouble on her and on you, Alec."

Hardly had Miss Henning ceased speaking, when her sister-in-law's voice rang through the garden: "Jack, I say—Jack—here—quick—here's a horrible insect on the sweet peas near my roses. Put down that can, quick, and come here."

There was an answering shout, and the sweet ringing voice ceased. Miss Henning's eyes gleamed spitefully, while the Professor's face turned deathly pale as he crossed the room and stood for a moment looking down at her.

"There; you can see for yourself the sort of terms they are on," she said, a sneer of open triumph turning down the corners of her thin lips, "and yet you allow this kind of thing to go on, while you sit there collecting beetles—beetles," she added contemptuously—"and your wife openly

"Stop!" thundered the Professor. "Cease this minute, Amelia!"

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calling a young man by his Christian name. Why, you ought to be ashamed of allowing her to be so frivolous—— "

"Stop!" thundered the Professor. "Cease this minute, Amelia. Do you hear me?" His usually gentle and intellectual face was transfigured, and he raised his hand so threateningly towards her that she drew back in great alarm.

"How dare you!" he stammered furiously. "How dare you—you, to speak against my wife." By an almost superhuman effort he controlled himself, and turning towards the mantelpiece, rested his trembling hands for a moment against it. Then he turned towards Miss Henning again, and the furious stammering voice grew still and very cold. "If for a moment you have thought any evil of Mabel, it is a base and wicked slander, Amelia," he began in a low voice.

Miss Henning, who like all bullies was a coward at heart, said falteringly "I'm sure, I only thought—I never meant to——" she paused, quailing and incoherent before the sudden storm of passion she had raised.

"I do not know what you may have meant, Amelia," her brother said icily, so icily that she looked at him with apprehension. "I only know what you said, and that is quite sufficient for me. You have cast aspersions on the good name of one of the sweetest and purest women on God's earth, and the woman I love and honour." He paused, his voice vibrating with the intensity of his emotion. "I need not condescend to deny your vulgar accusations, Amelia—they are the creations of a mind that cannot be good itself, or it would never have found room for such hateful doubts."

Miss Henning, who, in spite of her anger and disappointment at his marriage, loved her brother very dearly, burst into tears, and sooner than incur such anger again, determined to retract.

"Alec, I didn't mean it," she sobbed. "I was perhaps mistaken."

The Professor looked at her with a face set in lines of inexorable judgment. "Were you? Well, it is a mistake you can never retrieve. You have basely maligned Mabel, who has always been true in her affection not only for me—but even for you." He said this with bitter contempt, and added harshly: "You are no longer a sister of either hers or mine, and I hope you will—er—leave this house as soon as possible." He turned towards the door, leaving Miss Henning, in her amazement, gazing stupidly and incredulously up at him.

Was this the brother she had hectored and bullied until the very day of his marriage? She felt crushed and frightened, but she made one more effort to reinstate herself in his favour. "I—I am sorry," she sobbed, "forgive me, Alec—forgive me."

"Never," replied the Professor bitterly, "never!" and a moment later he had left the room.

II.

Mrs. Henning was busily washing the green-fly off the roses when a harmless stag-beetle frightened her into calling loudly for Mr. Allingham.

"Here, Jack, quick; here's a horrible insect on the sweet peas, close to my roses." Jack Allingham, who was filling her water-can for her, deposited it on the ground, and ran quickly towards her. He lifted the unoffending beetle and dropped it gently over the low wall into the kitchen garden. "Ugh, what a monster," said Mrs. Henning. "Fancy Alec collecting things like that—how can he?"

She sank into a garden chair under a shady tree as she spoke, and began to idly fan herself with a large cabbage leaf in which she had lately carried some strawberries. "Isn't it hot and lovely?"

"Yes, very lovely," answered Mr. Allingham, as he threw himself on the ground beside her, and glanced admiringly at the pretty flushed face.

"Isn't it wonderful that Alec can care to spend such a day indoors?"

"That is one of the penalties one has to pay for being so learned," said her companion with a faint sneer, which was wholly lost on Mabel Henning.

"Yes, isn't he clever?" she said, turning an eager, childish face towards him. "Do you know, I believe he is the youngest Professor in Europe. He is only thirty-four, and yet he has passed such splendid examinations."

Mr. Allingham looked bored. "I wish women wouldn't talk about their husbands. It's a stupidity in a plain one and a crime in a pretty one." Aloud he only said pleasantly, "Yes, thirty-four is young for a Professor, yet it is old for a husband, at any rate, for the husband of such a baby, eh?" he laughed.

"I'm very far from a baby," said Mrs. Henning with dignity. "I'm nearly twenty-one, and I'm ever so old in some things."

He smiled at the childish speech, and for a few moments lay watching her silently. "I wish I was not obliged to go away next week!" he said to himself. "What a sweet child it is, and what a pleasure it would be to make a

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"Mrs. Henning . . . I am going away next week."

woman of her." He looked curiously at the girl's lovely flushed face. "How unconscious she is. I wonder if she cares—I wonder!"

He hardly knew. She was so easily pleased, and so glad to see him that sometimes he fancied that he had succeeded in drawing her love away from the Professor. Yet at other times she spoke so openly of her admiration for her husband that he began to doubt his powers. Yet it seemed to him wholly incredible that this little country girl should remain impervious to his fascinations. Had he not often succeeded with other women? Yes, she must care; it was impossible that she should not do so, he said to himself—still he must be quite sure before he said anything to her of his love. He would put her to the test—a test he had used so often and so successfully with other women. He raised himself on his elbow and looked at her with an expression of great regret and sadness.

"Mrs. Henning," he said in a low voice, "I am going away next week, and for a long, long time, I fear." He waited eagerly to see the effect of this announcement.

"Going away," echoed Mabel Henning blankly. "Why—where to? Must you really go? Oh, I am sorry." She paused, looking questioningly down at him.

He sprang to his feet, and, leaning against the tree under which she sat, looked tenderly down on her. "Are you really sorry, little lady?"

"Of course I am," answered she eagerly. "There'll be no one to water my plants, or catch the beetles, or cut off the dead roses, or do anything."

"Your gardener can do that much for you," said Jack Allingham stiffly.

"Oh, he's too busy," she replied calmly. "Besides, you're so much quicker, and you are so good and nice to me," she added, looking very kindly up at him.

Mr. Allingham looked carefully around him, and then glanced towards the house. There was no one in sight, and the shady seat was completely hidden from view by the thick overhanging branches of the tree under which it had been placed. He made a sudden movement, and, bending over Mrs. Henning, seized her hands in his, and whispered passionately:

"Mrs. Henning—Mabel, darling—I love you. I have always loved you, ever since the first day I saw you, and now I cannot leave you—I cannot. I know how dull your life is, darling," he continued, rapidly and eagerly, "and I cannot leave you. Tell me you love me, Mabel, dear, speak to me."

For a minute Mrs. Henning had been too dazed to take in the full meaning of the rapidly-uttered words, but a moment later she had torn her hand from his grasp and stood confronting him with scarlet cheeks and flashing eyes.

"Tell you I love you," she cried, going closely up to him, and staring angrily into his abashed face. "How dare you, you coward—you coward! How dare you think I should love you when you know how I love the Professor? I did like you, but I hate you now, and I don't think you are good enough to be in the same garden with him, and I wish he had come out and heard you, and I wish—oh, do go away at once, this very minute," she cried, and burst into a childish fit of sobbing.

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Mr. Allingham stood cursing his hastiness and ill-luck. He cut a very pitiful figure as he stood there undecided how to leave with any show of dignity.

Suddenly Mabel dried her eyes and looked angrily up at him again. "It is quite time you paid the rest of your visits," she said, unconsciously repeating what the Professor had said to his sister, "and I beg you will never come here again, never," and without touching his hand or heeding his stammered apology and explanation, she walked rapidly away to the house.

* * * * *

An hour later she went slowly into the Professor's study. He was sitting idly in the arm-chair by his table, his head resting despondently on his hand.

He started as his wife came quickly through the French window, and, running up to him, knelt down by his side and flung her arms impetuously round his neck.

"Why, Mabel, what is the matter, my love?"

"Nothing," she answered, hiding her face against his sleeve, "nothing, but I'm tired, and I've got a headache, Alec." The Professor lifted her on to his knee. "What are you tired of, Mab?"

"Nothing," she answered brightly, for the very feeling of his arm round her filled her with a sense of security. "I'm only silly, Alec," she laughed. "It's so hot, and I've done such a lot of the flowers."

"Where's Jack Allingham?" asked her husband. "Hasn't he been helping you?"

"Yes, but he's gone, he's no good at gardening," she said lightly; "besides, I'm tired of him, and he's going away next week. Come out and see my roses, Alec," she added coaxingly—"you never look at them now, and I do so want you to see the new ones."

The Professor rose at once: "Certainly, Mabel," he said pleasantly—"not that I am a great judge of roses, except these, which I fear are not quite so bright as usual," and he bent gently and patted his wife's soft cheek.

"Oh, it's only the heat. I know you don't care for flowers," she laughed, "bu perhaps you'll find a beetle on the roses instead, and then you'll be happy, won't you?"

As they turned into the garden, Miss Henning came slowly across the lawn towards them. Her face was very pale, and

She had torn her hand from his grasp and stood confronting him with scarlet cheeks and flashing eyes.

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"Come along; I'm going round the garden to say good-bye to the roses."

Mabel fancied it bore traces of tears. She left her husband, and ran towards her sister-in-law, calling out: "What is it, Amelia, do you want me? Have you been looking for me?"

Miss Henning, carefully avoiding the Professor's eye, said in stereotyped tones: "Yes, Mabel, I have been looking for you, I wish to say good-bye, and to thank you for your hospitality. I am going home."

"Going home," echoed Mrs. Henning blankly—"why, whatever for, Amelia? I thought you were going to stay the whole summer with us. I do hope nothing is the matter. Does Alec know?" she added, turning towards her husband.

Miss Henning compressed her thin lips, and the tears started to her eyes again: "Yes—I have told him, Mabel——"

The Professor was apparently deeply absorbed in the beauties of the sunset sky above him. There was a moment's uncomfortable silence. Then Mabel turned towards her husband: "Alec, I'm afraid I don't understand," she said very gently, for she saw that something of great gravity had taken place between brother and sister—something about which she knew nothing. "I don't understand, dear. Cannot you ask Amelia to stay?"

There was a moment's pause, and the Professor's face softened as he glanced at his wife, but it grew inexorable again as he turned away from her. "I am afraid not, Mabel. My sister is going to pay some other visits, and I shall be obliged to you, deeply obliged, my love, if you will refrain from asking either of us questions." He then once more directed his eyes towards the sunset, and Miss Henning with a sob turned rapidly away.

III.

THE PROFESSOR was in his study reading aloud a list to his wife, and she was writing rapidly. "There, that's enough, I'm sure you are tired, Mab."

She laughingly held the paper towards him, "Don't I write a lovely hand?"

"Beautiful," he answered, "but I hope this wretched wrist of mine will be all right now in a day or so, then I need not trouble you any more"

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"I like it," answered his wife—"it's no trouble. The only thing I hate are the stupid old Latin words."

The Professor laughed. "What a baby you are, Mab."

"Not at all," replied his wife with dignity. "Oh, by the way, that reminds me, to-morrow will be my birthday, Alec; my twenty-first birthday." She grew suddenly nervous as she looked shyly towards him. "We shall have been married two whole years," she said gently, "and it is very important my being twenty-one."

"Yes, it is a great age," said the Professor, laughing; "almost time to put your hair up. I beg your pardon, it is up, isn't it?" he laughed again.

His wife smiled, and coming towards him, put her hand on his shoulder. "Listen, Alec," she whispered, tenderly, "you have to do whatever I ask you, and give me anything I like on my twenty-first birthday."

"Even to the half of my kingdom," agreed the Professor. "Well, say on, Baby; what do you want? If it is to be had, you shall have it."

"Is that a promise, Alec?"

"Certainly."

"And you won't break it?"

"Of course not," replied the Professor, indignantly.

"Well," said his wife slowly, and resting her soft face against his arm, as she spoke, "I—I want you to let me go and see Amelia."

He would have drawn away from her, but she clung tightly to his arm. "Alec, I hear she has been ill, very ill. Listen, dear; she loves you, and she can't be happy, and you must make it up and be nice—so there," she finished up suddenly.

The Professor looked gravely at her. "I cannot break my promise, Mabel," he said quietly, "but you must first hear the reason why Amelia and I have quarrelled, then you can decide for yourself whether you will have her here again or not."

A pause, and then Mabel said gently: "Was it about me, Alec?"

"Yes, Mab."

"Then I don't want to hear it," she said, and added, with a sigh of relief, "Oh, I am glad it was only about me, Alec, because, you see, if it was anything unkind I have long since forgiven it, and so have you, and so there's an end of it, isn't there?"

The Professor turned and shook his head. "No, I haven't," he began, but she laid her little hand over his lips. "Yes you have, Alec dear," she said gently, "and so have I, and it's all over and forgotten now, and we'll write to her this evening. Come along; I'm going round the garden to say good-bye to the roses," she added. "Come, too, there's a dear, and don't frown, because it frightens me dreadfully." She opened the window as she spoke, and ran lightly down the steps on to the lawn.

The Professor stood for a moment in the window. "God bless her," he murmured softly and solemnly to himself, and followed her slowly into the garden.

THIS is the "SEA LADY," the fascinating heroine of H. G. WELLS' latest romance, now appearing in

Pearson's Magazine.

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FIORETTA.

Thou art to me a thing of gentlest grace,
My own sweet flower!
And all my days, throughout the interlace
Of sun and shower,
I breathe the love reflected in thy face
From hour to hour.

Though other eyes may o'er thy beauty roam,
And sated be,
Within thy heart there is a sainted home
For love and me,
And there my life will dream into its gloom,
And end in thee!

W. GORN OLD.

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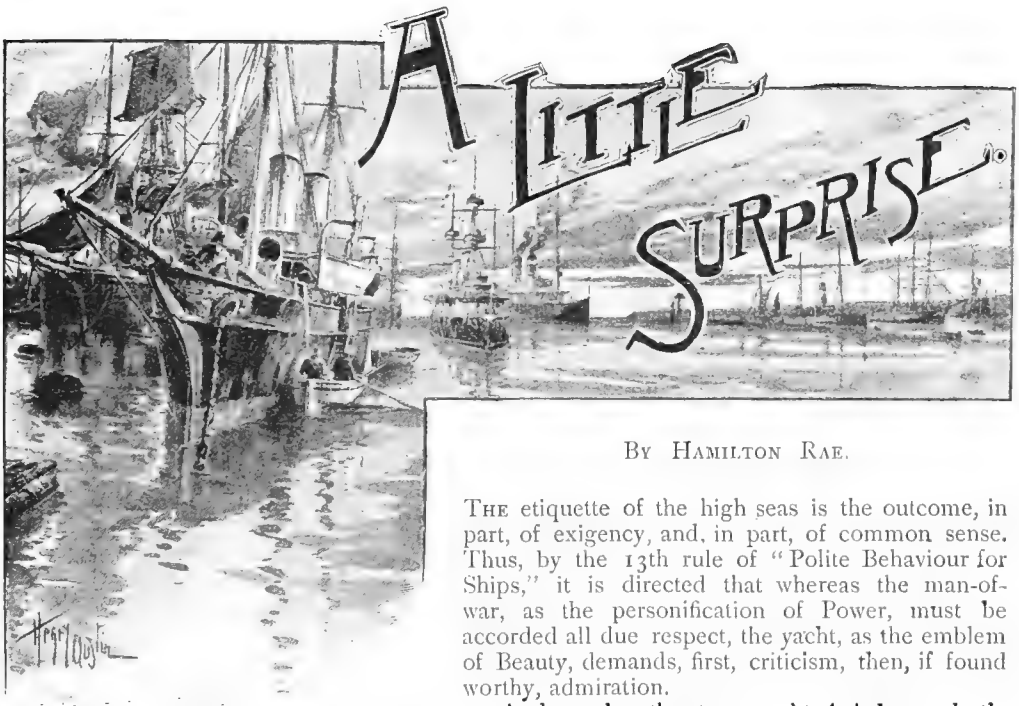

By Hamilton Rae.

The etiquette of the high seas is the outcome, in part, of exigency, and, in part, of common sense. Thus, by the 13th rule of "Polite Behaviour for Ships," it is directed that whereas the man-of-war, as the personification of Power, must be accorded all due respect, the yacht, as the emblem of Beauty, demands, first, criticism, then, if found worthy, admiration.

And so, when the steam yacht *Ariadne* modestly slipped into the harbour of Las Palmas and dropped anchor in a quiet corner, the meaner craft in the port, mindful of their duty, at once proceeded to subject her to a critical and extensive examination.

"Plenty of paint, but the lines of a tramp." Such had been the verdict of H.M.S. *Argo*, and, as coming from so undoubted an authority, it had been immediately endorsed by all present. Nevertheless, it is within the bounds of possibility that one or two weak-kneed brethren, in the shape of a hulking, tank-shaped cargo-boat and a tubby Dutch brig, might have so far forgotten their manners and the deference due to the man-of-war as to permit themselves to be moved even to admiration by the yacht's trim appearance had not the arrival in the harbour of one of His Britannic Majesty's transports occupied their attention to the exclusion of all else.

On the yacht's deck, a couple of men, the one, a tall fellow arrayed in orthodox yachting costume, the other, a short, dapper individual with the air of a retired tradesman, were pacing to and fro the while they discussed the new arrival.

"She sails at five," the taller of the two was saying, with a jerk of his head towards the huge transport lying peacefully at anchor a short distance away. "The authorities have given way on the water question; she is to be permitted to have as much as she wants." He spoke excellent English, though it was plain, from the lengthening of his vowels and the twist of his "r's," that the language he employed did not represent his nationality.

"Umph!" grunted his companion. "Then we'll follow about eight. That ought to bring us up with her before daylight."

The tall man chuckled softly.

"The less light the better—for *our* business," he said. "It would be awkward to have one of His Majesty's cruisers poking her nose in and spoiling the fun. But I don't think there is any fear of that. They're as innocent as lambs. I have made pretty searching inquiries and as far as I can learn they haven't the least suspicion of our purpose. And why should they? The *Ariadne*, private yacht, with her owner Don Ramon de Spinola on board" —again the man laughed quietly—"calls in here for water and general stores. Is there anything out of the way in that, I should like to know?"

The short gentleman shook his head, though somewhat lugubriously.

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"No, certainly not," continued the other emphatically, by way of discounting his companion's uncertainty. "I tell you what it is, Sims," enthusiastically, "this job is going to be a walk over, my boy."

"Don't know so much about that," muttered Sims. "It takes a clever man to hoodwink the British Navy. I've been there, and I know. A man doesn't serve fifteen years in His Majesty's marine without learning a few wrinkles. And if they *do* catch us—well, I hope you've made your will, that's all."

"Long ago," rejoined the tall man, pleasantly, "left everything to myself. And as for catching us, it is simply impossible. We're a couple of knots faster than the smartest cruiser they have, and we're not going about with our eyes shut. Anyhow it is worth the risk. A cool ten thousand for every hen-coop we send to the bottom—why we shall be millionaires by Christmas!"

"That may, or may not be," said Sims, still gloomily. "As I've said, I've been there and I know 'em. What about the list? Have you got it?"

"Here it is. Full particulars of every transport—speed, tonnage, port, date of sailing, and number of troops on board. I daresay there'll be more to follow, but that's the programme up to the present. And if we can manage to bag this first consignment, we shall have done our share. It will be time to be making tracks by then."

"You're right," exclaimed Sims decisively, "if not sooner. I'm jolly well mistaken if the *Argo* or her consort isn't after us long before we're even half-way through this lot. And Heaven help us if they once get us within range of their quick-firers!"

The tall man shot a quick glance at his companion.

"Funking it?" he asked, with a slight lift of his eyebrows.

"Not me," retorted Sims savagely, "I've taken this job in hand, and I'm going to see it through. I'd do it for the sake of being even with them, apart from the money."

"You have never told me the history of that little affair of yours," said the other. "They accused you of embezzling some money, didn't they?"

"They did," snorted Sims, "and me as innocent as a new-born babe. But they broke me all the same, and I'll have my revenge."

"Well, you'll never have a better chance," said the tall man. "It might have been arranged purposely for you. I cannot understand why you should have the least doubt as to its success. To me it seems an absolute certainty, and as easy as that," and he snapped his fingers. "You come up astern in the dusk or dark—I suppose there is no law to prevent a yacht overtaking and passing one of these floating barracks, is there?—you let fly your torpedo at close quarters, and there you are. They will be down below before they know what has happened. Then you hang about till the next one comes along, and repeat the dose. And if, in the meantime, you should happen to run up against one of His Majesty's men-of-war—well, there is nothing very suspicious about a harmless yacht, eh?"

"Sounds right enough," was Sims's comment, accompanied by another dubious shake of the head, "but I'm no fool. I recognise the risks if you don't."

"Sh——" whispered the other. "The men will hear you—I suppose they understand?" jerking his thumb in the direction of the forecastle.

"As much as is good for 'em," said Sims with a grin.

"Very good!" responded the other. "I leave it entirely with you. We can depend upon them, I suppose?"

"You may bet!" was Sims's quiet rejoinder. "Every man Jack of 'em! I took good care to make sure of that before I engaged 'em."

"That's all right," said the other. Then in a louder tone: "Is my boat alongside?"

"Yes, sir."

"I shall come off between seven and eight. See that the boat is waiting for me."

"Yes, sir."

Don Ramon stepped on to the accommodation ladder, and as his mouth descended to a level with Sims's ear, he whispered:

"I have an appointment with Simpson at five. He'll be able to give me the official latest. Useful man, Simpson! Expensive, but he's worth it."

"Take care he isn't playing a double game," rejoined Sims. "*It has been done.* Hear all and say nothing—it's sound advice."

The other smiled as if satisfied of his ability to outwit a dozen Simpsons, and, taking his seat in the boat's stern, he gave the order to push off.

* * * * *

The sun was rapidly nearing the horizon as the big transport hauled up her anchor and got under way. The twelve hundred troops on board crowded the decks and overflowed into the rigging. On board the *Argo* the

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ship's band struck up a lively air, and as the *Belvoir Castle* slowly forged ahead towards the harbour-mouth, the man-o'-war's men burst into round upon round of cheering, to which the soldiers as heartily replied.

Suddenly a steam launch shot out from the cruiser's side, and swiftly making its way across to the *Belvoir Castle*, the naval officer in charge sprang up the transport's accommodation ladder and handed a sealed note to the captain.

"From Captain Rawston," said the young officer, saluting, "to be opened as soon as you are outside." Then with a hearty "Pleasant voyage to you, Captain," the officer hurried down into the launch, and the little vessel steamed back to the *Argo*.

A few minutes later the signal, "Good luck," flew out from the cruiser's main truck. With an answering, "Thank you," the *Belvoir Castle* ran out into the open sea, and, turning her head southward, commenced the last stage of her long journey.

On the transport's upper bridge, Captain Brown was anxiously perusing the note from the commander of the cruiser. Clearly it afforded anything but pleasant reading, for a heavy frown gathered on the skipper's brow,

Suddenly a steam launch shot out from the cruiser's side.

and he gnawed his moustache in evident perturbation.

"Funny thing!" he muttered. "Hundred miles to the westward, and no lights. Something wrong somewhere!" Then thrusting the letter into his pocket, he descended the ladder, and disappeared into the chart-house.

Quickly the brightness of day faded into gloom. Night set in, calm and still; a galaxy of stars studded the clear sky. A lazy roll, varied by an occasional heave, was all the response vouchsafed by the *Belvoir Castle* to the slight ocean swell, as steadily the huge vessel ploughed her way southwards.

* * * * *

Two hours later the steam yacht *Ariadne* crept quietly out of Las Palmas harbour, and,

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like a hound with nose to the scent, hurried southward in the wake of her prey. Don Ramon's investigations had failed to reveal the slightest trace of suspicion on the part of the British authorities, and he had returned to the yacht more firmly convinced than ever that there would be no difficulty in carrying out his nefarious plans.

Just before three o'clock the forward watch reported a light ahead. Sims at once hurried on deck, and a few moments later Don Ramon joined him. Away on the port bow a light, swaying gently from side to side, glimmered faintly through the darkness.

"That's her right enough," Sims remarked, "I didn't expect to be up with her for another half-hour, but she is taking it easy, I suppose. Doesn't know what she has behind her," and he laughed. "Is everything ready below?" he asked, turning to a burly fellow who stood by the rail straining his eyes into the darkness.

"By George! Look there! They are turning their search-light on us!"

"Yes, sir. Only waitin' for orders."

"Then see that the men are at their gun-stations, and stand by the port tube ready to let fly as soon as I give the word. You'll have a big target and a short range."

"Aye, aye, sir. We'll get her, no fear."

"I believe he will, too," said Sims, as the man hurried away. "I tried him at Bahia and he did some wonderful things. He was in the United States Navy for five years, but he was too fond of drink, and they cleared him out. By George! Look there! They are turning their search-light on us. Great Scott! this is awkward. I shouldn't have thought they possessed such a thing."

The two men held their breath as the great beam of light swung down through a right angle and enfolded the yacht in a grip from which, though intangible, there was no escape.

Then as suddenly it disappeared.

Sims heaved a sigh of relief.

"That's all right," he muttered. "Concludes we're perfectly harmless. We'll go right ahead."

Ten minutes passed; less than two hundred yards now separated the two ships. The hull of the vessel in front loomed like a huge blot on the face of the waters.

Sims turned to Don Ramon.

"Just make sure that they are perfectly ready below, will you?" he said. "We must run no risks."

Scarcely had the words left his lips when, with startling suddenness, there came a loud hail from out the darkness, immediately on the yacht's port bow.

"Ship ahoy, there! Heave-to!"

To Sims, staring into the night, it seemed that he could detect two small black patches rising and falling a short distance away to port. What was unmistakable, however, was the dull thud-thud of oars swinging in the rowlocks.

"Heave-to at once," came the command again, in a sharper tone. "I'm going to board you. That's

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H.M.S. *Pearl* ahead, so no nonsense."

Simultaneously the warship's search-light again flashed out, illuminating the surface of the ocean for some distance round the yacht, and revealing to Sims's anxious gaze a couple of boats bearing down upon his quarter.

For a moment Sims hesitated. One wild plan after another flashed through his mind, only to be at once dismissed as hopeless. Escape was impossible; that was perfectly evident. The fellow ahead could blow him out of the water if necessary. There was nothing for it but to put the best face on the matter and — obey orders.

"Unship the guns and tubes as fast as you can," he said to his mate, "and get the rifles and ammunition back into the magazine. I'll keep this fellow off as long as I can."

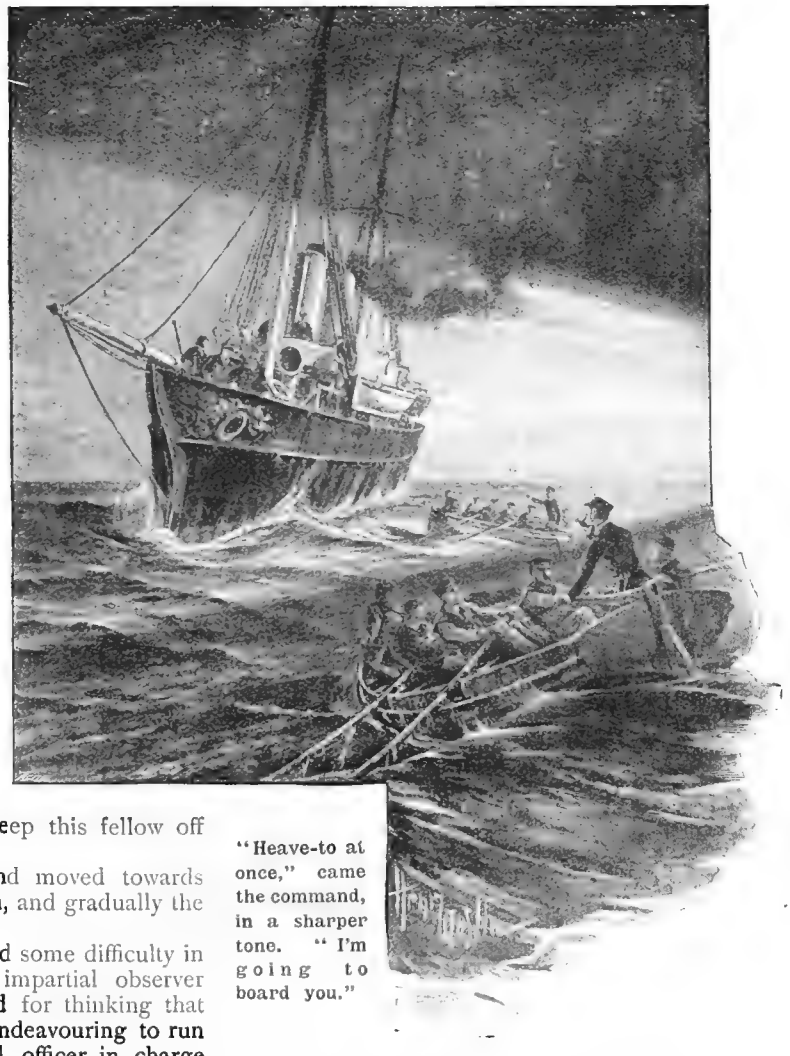
Reluctantly Sims's hand moved towards the engine-room telegraph, and gradually the yacht slowed down.

Apparently the boats had some difficulty in getting alongside. An impartial observer might have been excused for thinking that the yacht was playfully endeavouring to run them down. The naval officer in charge savagely called Heaven and earth to witness that the yacht's captain was the biggest and most incompetent fool he had ever met on the high seas, to which the yacht's captain replied in language equally vigorous and certainly more abusive.

There was a momentary truce as the lieutenant scrambled on board.

"Permit me to congratulate you on your seamanship, Captain," remarked the naval man affably. "I am sorry to give you occasion for so remarkable a display, but, unhappily, it is unavoidable—I have orders to overhaul your ship."

"Overhaul my ship!" screamed Sims. "Overhaul my ship! And, pray, by what authority, sir? It is an absolutely unjustifiable outrage—yes, outrage, sir! and by Heaven!——"



"Heave-to at once," came the command, in a sharper tone. "I'm going to board you."

"You may spare your breath," interposed the Lieutenant quietly, "I am here to overhaul your ship, and overhauled she will be."

"But we're a private yacht, sir—under the Brazilian flag!"

"Then in that case you have nothing to fear from any amount of overhauling."

"But you have no right; it is perfectly unwarranted. I shall resist the execution of your orders, and if you persist, then, by thunder! you must answer for the consequences."

The Lieutenant turned and motioned to a couple of his men.

"Just look after this gentleman," he said. "If his eccentricity shows any sign of further

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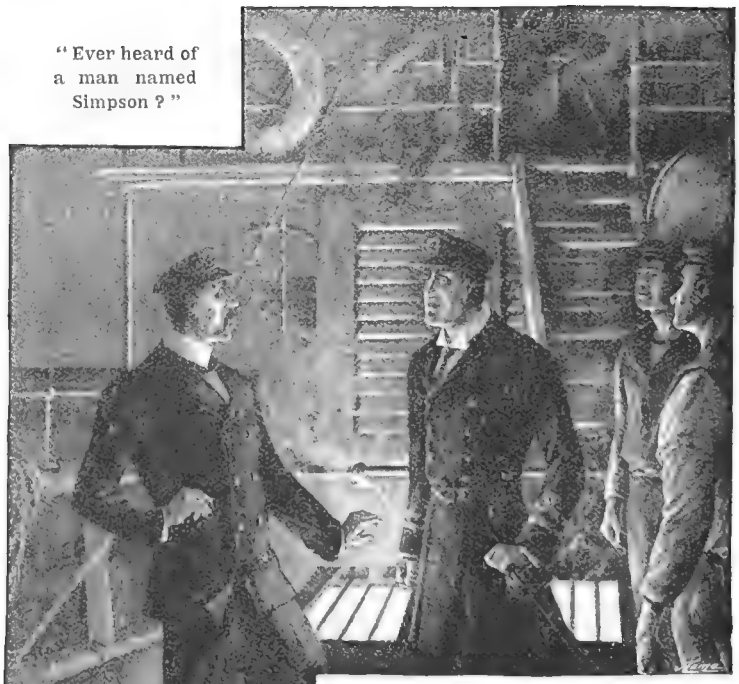

"Ever heard of a man named Simpson?"

development then drop him over the side into the boat." The man-of-war's men grinned. "You, Hayes and Long, follow me."

Some ten minutes passed before the Lieutenant reappeared. He was followed by Don Ramon, the latter fuming and vapouring in a ludicrous manner. The naval officer eyed the yacht's "owner" steadily and in silence for a few moments, then he asked sarcastically.

"You scarcely bargained for this, eh? Bit of a surprise to you? Well, I don't wonder at it. There's a considerable difference between a first-class cruiser and a defenceless transport, isn't there? Perhaps you will be interested to hear that we changed places some three hours ago, and that the *Belvoir Castle* is now thirty miles to the westward. Ever heard of a man named Simpson? Perhaps that will shed a little light on the subject."

Don Ramon turned ghastly pale, gasped, tottered, and finally collapsed altogether. The Lieutenant shot an angry, contemptuous glance at the fellow, then swung round and strode over to Sims.

"That's a nice little collection you've got below," he said pleasantly. "Rather out of place on a *private yacht*, though, isn't it? Only ornamental, perhaps? Well, they're nasty things to play with — torpedoes and maxims and that sort of toy. You will be hurting yourselves, if you are not careful. Perhaps, as they are rather more in our line, we had better take charge of them for you."

Sims vouchsafing no reply, the Lieutenant changed his tone to one of perfect gravity.

"Under the circumstances, my orders are to conduct the Captain of this vessel and the gentleman who terms himself 'Don Ramon' on board H.M.S. *Pearl*. You will be the guests of Captain Stone as far as Cape Town, whither the cruiser is bound. Your crew will consider themselves under arrest; my men here will work the ship to Cape Town. Mr. Thornton," addressing an officer standing in front of the file of sailors, "you will take charge of this vessel for the present."

Sims began anew to bluster and object, but the Lieutenant stopped him.

"The boat is waiting, gentlemen," said the naval man quietly, and the baffled conspirators sullenly clambered over the side and let themselves down into the little craft below.

A fortnight later the *Pearl* and her capture steamed into Capetown Harbour. The evidence against the latter being deemed insufficient, however, the authorities ordered the vessel and crew to be liberated, contenting themselves with seizing her munitions of war. With such a decision Sims and his coadjutor had every reason to be content, and within twenty-four hours of the promulgation of the court's judgment the yacht was on her way to sea again—in search of further villainy.

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"Mind Your Skirt!"

Decidedly dainty, but can be done only if the hands are quite free.

A few Remarks by a mere Man on Skirts and their Management.

By Hector Grainger.

We men have not even the wish to help.

I allude, of course, to that undying grievance of woman—the skirt. Nature, custom and society have seen fit to make life a burden to women in many ways; their freedom is infinitely curtailed; while men go out into the great world, they have to busy themselves with the petty activities of the home; they have no voice in the government of their native land; they have to obey their husbands; to struggle single-handed with the cook and the housemaid, and, heaviest burden of all, to wear skirts. For only think what this means you, happy creature, whom custom has permitted to clothe your nether extremities in trousers! Imagine yourself in skirts—heavy, hot, horribly impeding to the motion, liable to catch in every chance nail and bramble, and necessitating—as this article attempts to show—the most artistic care on dusty or muddy roads. How long would you bear this burden? Not a single week, I dare swear. And yet to the wail of womankind we men turn a deaf ear, or, if we listen at all, shrug our shoulders and reply: "You ladies must bear the tyranny of skirts or incur our displeasure." We are brutes.

Occasionally there are rebellions; that of the so-called "bloomers" being the most notable of late years. In England it lasted a very short while, and was kept alive mainly by women whose natural charms had never earned them much admiration from men. They had so little to lose by defying male prejudice! But in Paris the rebellion has reached alarming dimensions; thousands, and among them the prettiest women in the world, ride abroad in "bloomers" (charmingly made, you may trust a Frenchwoman for that), cheerfully unconcerned at the uplifted male eyebrow and hostile male stare. What may eventually happen, Heaven only knows! Paris is the leader of fashion and the leader of rebellions. In time she may influence the whole feminine world——! Appalling thought!

But skirts are still with us, and their delicate management is to me a constant source of admiration. What should we do, I wonder, we men, if we had to protect a skirt from the muddy road? We might, had we been brought up to the

Neither of these girls care much for appearances, so long as the skirt is well lifted above the dirt of the street.

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When holding up an umbrella it is quite unnecessary to use both hands to lift your skirt.—

delicate art, save it from collecting mud; but at what a frightful cost of grace and dignity! The figure we should cut might well move the passing 'bus-horses to laughter. For merely to keep the mud off it is but one third of the task, you must do it with elegance, and finally you should learn to do it with style.

—One hand is amply sufficient if you lift the skirt in front.

For elegance and style in the management of her skirt, I never saw anyone, on the stage or off, approach Miss Maud Jeffries. In the recent play of "Herod" she wore a dress reaching much farther down than her feet in front, and with a train at least six feet long. The problem was not to keep the mud off, but to avoid tripping herself up. The play grew impassioned; she had to move rapidly about the stage. For a while I sat on pins and needles, my whole attention riveted on the reckless heroine. At times her downfall seemed inevitable, so apparently entangled was she in that awful train. But no! With a movement now of her foot, now of her hand, now of her body she freed herself, and each of these movements was in itself a marvel of easy grace, a finished dramatic poem.

But all women are not Maud Jeffries—more's the pity!—and yet how admirable is the skill which the majority, from duchess to coster girl, display in the management of their skirts! Of course, and alas, there are various cruel exceptions. Many ladies of a certain age, who, through long neglect, have grown careless with regard to their outward appearance, cut sorry figures when crossing a muddy road. Their whole thought is to keep their skirts from the dirt—quite a secondary consideration with the pretty girl—and they do it with a will, dragging the skirt about anyhow, and giving one the idea that they are frantically endeavouring to prevent it flying away.

Another exception is the average Bluestocking. This lady, in spite of many excellent qualities, among which wisdom is generally conspicuous by reason of its

Scarcely graceful, but very prevalent nowadays.

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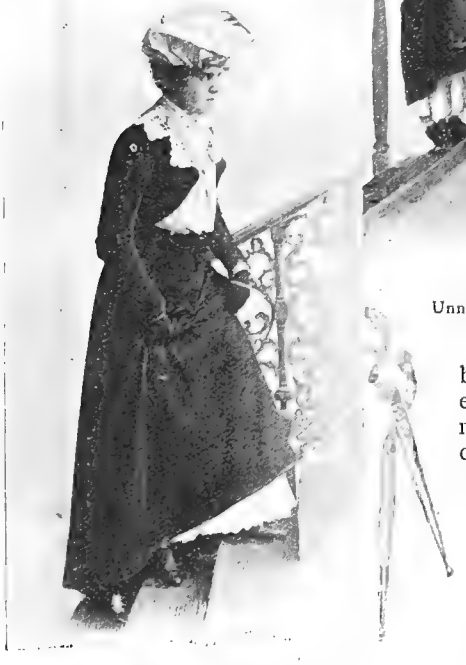
absence, frequently affects a most regretable contempt for grace and beauty—those two most essentially feminine qualities. The cynic would not be slow in giving you his reason for this contempt. But I will not mention so wicked a slander. Blue-stockings are *not* always plain and graceless by nature. I have known many girls quite at home in the rarified air of Higher Mathematics, and for all that, charming to look upon. But seldom have I met one of these who deigned to cultivate those charms and graces. Too, too often does your Blue-stocking affect disgraceful hats, screaming colours, ill-fitting bodices, badly-hanging skirts, and as for displaying skill in the manipulation of the latter, she would as soon think of *not* displaying her learning at every opportunity. Her mind is full of loftier aims. As if there were any loftier aims for a woman than the cultivation of grace! But, pardon me! I am a mere man, and as such, hopelessly wrong-headed.

Getting into a 'bus; a manœuvre requiring very delicate management of the skirt.



Unnecessary: when a girl goes upstairs—

—she need only lift her dress up in front.

France is the leader in the fashions of all things appertaining to feminine grace and beauty, and in the matter of skirt-lifting she has ever something new and original to suggest. You need not hear a Frenchwoman speak in order to discover her nationality, you need only observe the way she holds her skirt. Grasping it in her left hand, she pulls it tightly across her hip, and the result may show off the figure to perfection, but—I ask the question in all humility—is it beautiful? Well, ladies, I will leave you to decide, and merely state my opinion which, coming as it does from so insignificant a person as myself, cannot give the least offence. I don't like this French fashion at all; in fact, I think it very unsightly, and I am in a perpetual state of wonder at its wide-spread adoption by our English girls. For if the style is not becoming in a Frenchwoman, in an Englishwoman how much less becoming must it be! For although their faces are every whit as beautiful, our women have not the figures of their Gallic sisters, and in order to make the French style of skirt-lifting in any degree pleasing you must have the well-rounded figure of the Frenchwoman, not the tall, over-slender forms so prevalent

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in this country. But such is only my opinion, as I said before; it does not seem to be generally endorsed among women, and who should be better able to give a final verdict on any question concerned with the skirt than those who wear and manage it?

The good old English style for me! Your true English lady crossing a muddy street—is there any sight in the world more charming? She grasps the back of her skirt about eight inches below the waist, pulls it lightly round, and lifts it just a few inches off the pavement. Why this simple action has so peculiar a charm for me is more than I can say. There is something about it so sweetly feminine—or womanly, I should rather say—so quietly graceful, so sedate, that I am often constrained to turn round and look after a pretty girl who passes me with lifted skirt. And lest you should think that my admiration for this old-fashioned style proves me to be merely an old fogey behind the times, let me tell you that before writing this article I asked quite a number of people what style of skirt-lifting they were most pleased with, and, would you believe it? they invariably gave their vote for the unassuming style of the average English lady.

The French style: the skirt is pulled tightly across the hip.

It has lately become the fashion to assert that men are every whit as fond of showing off their fine clothes as women—a silly fashion, I think, and one that won't bear a moment's examination. Of course there are men, and hundreds of them, whose greatest joy consists in displaying their ties and cuff-links and patent leather boots. But luckily the majority don't care a rap about their clothes so long as these are decent, and still less do they care what others think about them. But all women worthy of the name delight in showing off their finery; happily so, for what a huge loss it would be to us if women took it into their heads one fine day that admiration for their outward appearance was not worth cultivating! Think of the pretty frocks we should miss—bows, bonnets, stuffs and colours! You may think me affected and sentimental when I say that life would be scarcely worth living if these were no more to be seen.

The English style: the skirt is lightly gathered up about eight inches from the waist.

The casual girl: she lifts her skirt mechanically; whether it is clear of the ground or not is a matter of supreme indifference.

And nothing does a woman more delight in revealing than the fringe of a prettily embroidered petticoat, and nothing, may I add, is more delightful to behold. When she has a new petticoat on, be the pavements never so dry, your true girl is certain to lift her skirt—the passers-by must share her delight in the rich embroidery, and her less lucky sisters must turn green with envy. All this makes half the pleasure of a new petticoat. Wonderful is indeed the female mind.

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THE REGENT'S PARK MURDER

Being the Fifth of a Series

of

"LONDON MYSTERIES."

By

Baroness E. Orczy.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

The Man *sitting in a corner of an A.B.C. shop who tells the tale to*

The Lady Journalist.

Aaron Cohen *(found murdered at Regent's Park).*

John Ashley *(accused of Cohen's murder).*

Walter Hatherell *(Ashley's friend).*

Arthur Chipps *(Ashley's valet).*

James Funnell *(a constable, witness at the trial of Ashley).*

I.

By this time I had become quite accustomed to my extraordinary *vis-a-vis* in the corner.

He was always there, when I arrived, in the self-same corner, dressed in one of his remarkable check tweed suits; he seldom said good-morning, and invariably when I appeared fidgeted with increased nervousness, with some tattered and knotty piece of string.

"Were you ever interested in the Regent's Park murder?" he asked me one day.

I replied that I had forgotten most of the particulars connected with that curious murder, but that I fully remembered the stir and flutter it had caused in a certain section of London Society.

"The racing and gambling set, particularly, you mean," he said. "All the persons implicated in the murder, directly or indirectly were of the type, commonly called 'Society men,' 'men about town,' whilst the Harewood Club in Hanover Square round which centred all the scandal in connection with the murder, was one of the smartest clubs in London.

"Probably the doings of the Harewood Club, which was essentially a gambling club, would for ever have remained 'officially' absent from the knowledge of the police authorities but for the murder in the Regent's Park and the revelations which came to light in connection with it.

"I dare say you know the quiet square which lies between Portland Place and the Regent's Park and is called Park Crescent at its south end, and subsequently Park Square East and West. The Marylebone Road with all its heavy traffic, cuts straight across the large square, and its pretty gardens, but the latter are connected together by a tunnel under the road.

"February 6th, 1899, was a very foggy night, nevertheless, Mr. Aaron Cohen, of 30, Park Square West, at two o'clock in the morning, having finally pocketed the heavy winnings which he had just swept off the green table of the Harewood Club, started to walk home alone. An hour later most of the inhabitants of Park Square West were aroused from their peaceful slumbers by the

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"'Why surely, it's Mr. Cohen from No. 30!'"

sounds of a violent altercation in the road. A man's angry voice was heard shouting violently for a minute or two, and was followed immediately by frantic screams of 'Police' and 'Murder.' Then there was the double sharp report of fire-arms, and nothing more.

"The fog was very dense and, as you no doubt have experienced yourself, it is very difficult to locate sound in a fog. Nevertheless, not more than a minute or two had elapsed before Constable F 18, the point policeman at the corner of Marylebone Road, arrived on the scene, and having first of all whistled for any of his comrades on the beat, began to grope his way about in the fog, more confused than effectually assisted by contradictory directions from the inhabitants of the house opposite, who were nearly falling out of the upper windows, as they shouted out to the constable.

"'By the railings, policeman.'

"'Higher up the road.'

"'No, lower down.'

"'It was on this side of the pavement I am sure.'

"'No, the other.'

"At last it was another policeman, F 22, who, turning into Park Square West from the north side, almost stumbled upon the body of a man lying on the pavement with his head against the railings of the Square. By this time quite a little crowd of people from the different houses in the road had come down, curious to know what had actually happened.

"The policeman turned the strong light of his bull's-eye lantern on the unfortunate man's face.

"'It looks as if he had been strangled, don't it?' he murmured to his comrade.

"And he pointed to the swollen tongue, the eyes half out of their sockets, blood-shot and congested, the purple almost black hue of the face.

"At this point one of the spectators, more callous to horrors, peered curiously into the dead man's face. He uttered an exclamation of astonishment.

"'Why, surely, it's Mr. Cohen from No. 30!'

"The mention of a name, familiar down the length of the street, had caused two or three other men to come forward and to look more closely into the horribly distorted mask of the murdered man.

"'Our next door neighbour, undoubtedly,' asserted Mr. Ellison, a young barrister, residing at No. 31.

"'What in the world was he doing this foggy night all alone, and on foot?' asked somebody else.

"'He usually came home very late. I fancy he belonged to some gambling club in town. I daresay he couldn't get a cab to bring him out here. Mind you, I don't know

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much about him. We only knew him to nod to.'

"'Poor beggar! it looks almost like an old-fashioned case of garrotting.'

"'Anyway, the blackguardly murderer, whoever he was, wanted to make sure he had killed his man!' added constable F 18 as he picked up an object from the pavement. 'Here's the revolver with two cartridges missing. You gentlemen heard the report just now?'

"'He don't seem to have hit him though. The poor bloke was strangled no doubt.'

"'And tried to shoot at his assailant obviously,' asserted the young barrister with authority.

"'If he succeeded in hitting the brute, there might be a chance of tracing the way he went.'

"'But not in the fog.'

"Soon, however, the appearance of the inspector, detective, and medical officer, who had quickly been informed of the tragedy, put an end to further discussion.

"The bell at No. 30 was rung, and the servants—all four of them women—were asked to look at the body.

"Amidst tears of horror, and screams of fright, they all recognised in the murdered man their master, Mr. Aaron Cohen. He was therefore conveyed to his own room pending the coroner's inquest."

II.

"The police had a pretty difficult task, you will admit, there were so very few indications to go by, and, at first literally no clue.

"The inquest revealed practically nothing. Very little was known in the neighbourhood about Mr. Aaron Cohen and his affairs. His female servants did not even know the name or whereabouts of the various clubs he frequented.

"He had an office in Throgmorton Street and went to business every day. He dined at home, and sometimes had friends to dinner. When he was alone he invariably went to the club, where he stayed until the small hours of the morning.

"The evening before the murder he had gone out at about nine o'clock. That was the last his servants had seen of him. With regard to the revolver all four servants swore positively that they had never seen it before, and that unless Mr. Cohen had bought it that very day, that it did not belong to their master.

"Beyond that, no trace whatever of the murderer had been found, but on the morning after the crime a couple of keys linked together by a short metal chain were found, close to a gate at the opposite end of the Square, that which immediately faced Portland Place. These were proved to be firstly, Mr. Cohen's latch-key, and secondly, his gate-key of the Square.

"It was therefore presumed that the murderer having accomplished his fell design, and ransacked his victim's pockets, had found the keys and made good his escape by slipping into the Square, cutting under the tunnel, and out again by the further gate. He then took the precaution not to carry the keys with him any further, but threw them away and disappeared in the fog.

"The jury returned a verdict of wilful murder against some person or persons unknown, and the police were put on their mettle to discover the unknown and daring murderer. The result of their investigations conducted with marvellous skill by Mr. William Fisher, led, about a week after the crime, to the sensational arrest of one of London's smartest young bucks.

"The case Mr. Fisher had got up against the accused briefly amounted to this:

"On the night of February 6th, soon after midnight, play began to run very high at the Harewood Club, in Hanover Square, Mr. Aaron Cohen held the bank at roulette against some twenty or thirty of his friends, mostly young fellows with no wits and plenty of money. 'The Bank' was winning heavily, and it appears that this was the third consecutive night on which Mr. Aaron Cohen had gone home richer by several hundreds than he had been at the start of play.

"Young John Ashley, who is the son of a very worthy county gentleman who is M.F.H. somewhere in the Midlands, was losing heavily, and in his case also, it appears that it was the third consecutive night that Fortune had turned her face against him.

"Remember," continued the man in the corner, "that when I tell you all these details and facts, I am giving you the combined evidence of several witnesses, which it took many days to collect and to classify.

"It appears that young Mr. Ashley, though very popular in society, was generally believed to be in what is vulgarly termed 'low water'; up to his eyes in debt, and mortally afraid of his dad, whose younger son he was, and who had on one occasion threatened to ship him off to Australia with a £5 note in his pocket if he made any further extravagant calls upon his paternal indulgence.

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"A few very heated words ensued."

"It was also evident to all John Ashley's many companions that the worthy M.F.H. held the purse strings in a very tight grip. The young man, bitten with the desire to cut a smart figure in the circles in which he moved, had often recourse to the varying fortunes which now and again smiled upon him across the green tables in the Harewood Club.

"Be that as it may, the general concensus of opinion at the Club was that young Ashley had changed his last 'pony' before he sat down to a turn of roulette with Aaron Cohen, on that particular night of February 6th.

"It appears that all his friends, conspicuous among whom was Mr. Walter Hatherell, tried their very best to dissuade him from pitting his luck against that of Cohen who had been having a most unprecedented run of good fortune. But young Ashley, heated with wine, exasperated at his own bad luck, would listen to no one; he tossed one £5 note after another on the board, he borrowed from those who would lend, then played on parole for awhile. Finally at half-past one in the morning, after a run of nineteen on the red, the young man found himself without a penny in his pockets, and owing a debt—a gambling debt—a debt of honour of £1500 to Mr. Aaron Cohen.

"Now we must render this much maligned gentleman that justice which was persistently denied to him by press and public alike; it was positively asserted by all those present that Mr. Cohen himself repeatedly tried to induce young Mr. Ashley to give up playing. He himself was in a delicate position in the matter, as he was the winner, and once or twice the taunt had risen to the young man's lips, accusing the holder of the bank of the wish to retire on a competence before the break in his luck.

"Mr. Aaron Cohen, smoking the best of Havanas, had finally shrugged his shoulders and said: 'As you please!'

"But at half-past one he had had enough of the player, who always lost and never paid—never could pay so Mr. Cohen probably believed. He therefore at that hour refused to accept Mr. John Ashley's 'promissory' stakes any longer. A few very heated words ensued, quickly checked by the management, who are ever on the alert to avoid the least suspicion of scandal.

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"In the meanwhile Mr. Hatherell with great good sense persuaded young Ashley to leave the Club and all its temptations and go home if possible to bed.

"The friendship of the two young men, which was very well known in society, consisted chiefly, it appears, in Walter Hatherell being the willing companion and helpmeet of John Ashley in his mad and extravagant pranks. But to-night the latter apparently tardily sobered by his terrible and heavy losses allowed himself to be led away by his friend from the scene of his disasters. It was then about twenty minutes to two.

"Here the situation becomes interesting," continued the man in the corner in his nervous way, "no wonder that the police interrogated at least a dozen witnesses, before they were quite satisfied that every statement was conclusively proved.

"Walter Hatherell after about ten minutes absence, that is to say at ten minutes to two, returned to the club room. In reply to several inquiries, he said that he had parted with his friend at the corner of New Bond Street, since he seemed anxious to be alone, and that Ashley said he would take a turn down Piccadilly before going home—he thought a walk would do him good.

"At two o'clock or thereabouts Mr. Aaron Cohen, satisfied with his evening's work, gave up his position at the bank, and pocketing his heavy winnings, started on his homeward walk, while Mr. Walter Hatherell left the club half-an-hour later.

"At three o'clock precisely the cries of 'Murder,' and the report of fire arms were heard in Park Square West, and Mr. Aaron Cohen was found strangled outside the garden railings."

III.

"Now at first sight the murder at Regent's Park appeared both to police and public as one of those silly, clumsy crimes, obviously the work of a novice and absolutely purposeless, seeing that it could but inevitably lead its perpetrators, without any difficulty, to the gallows.

"You see a motive had been established. 'Seek him whom the crime benefits,' say our French *confrères*. But there was something more than that.

"Constable James Funnell, on his beat, turned from Portland Place into Park Crescent a few minutes after he had heard the clock at Holy Trinity Church, Marylebone, strike half past two. The fog at that moment was perhaps not quite so dense as it was later on in the morning, and the policeman saw two gentlemen in overcoats and top-hats leaning arm in arm against the railings of the Square, close to the gate. He could not, of course, distinguish their faces because of the fog, but he heard one of them saying to the other:

"'It is but a question of time, Mr. Cohen. I know my father will pay the money for me, and you will lose nothing by waiting.'

"To this the other apparently made no reply, and the constable passed on; when he returned to the same spot, after having walked over his beat, the two gentlemen had gone, but later on it was near this very gate that the two keys referred to at the inquest had been found.

"Another interesting fact," added the man in the corner, with one of those sarcastic smiles of his which I could not quite explain, "was the finding of the revolver upon the scene of the crime. That revolver shown to Mr. Ashley's valet was sworn to by him as being the property of his master.

"All these facts made, of course, a very remarkable, so far quite unbroken, chain of circumstantial evidence against Mr. John Ashley. No wonder, therefore, that the police, thoroughly satisfied with Mr. Fisher's work and their own, applied for a warrant against the young man, and arrested him in his rooms in Clarges Street, exactly a week after the committal of the crime.

"As a matter of fact, you know, experience has invariably taught me that when a murderer seems particularly foolish and clumsy, and proofs against him seem particularly damning, that is the time when the police should be most guarded against pit-falls.

"Now in this case, if John Ashley had indeed committed the murder in Regent's Park in the manner suggested by the police, he would have been a criminal in more senses than one, for idiocy of that kind is to my mind worse than many crimes.

"The prosecution brought its witnesses up in triumphal array one after another. There were the members of the Harewood Club—who had seen the prisoner's excited condition, after his heavy gambling losses to Mr. Aaron Cohen; there was Mr. Hatherell who, in spite of his friendship for Ashley, was bound to admit that he had parted from him at the corner of Bond Street at twenty minutes to two, and had not seen him again till his return home at five a.m.

"Then came the evidence of Arthur Chipps, John Ashley's valet. It proved of a very sensational character.

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"The policeman saw two gentlemen in overcoats and top-hats leaning arm in arm against the railings."

"He deposed that on the night in question his master came home at about ten minutes to two. Chipps had then not yet gone to bed. Five minutes later Mr. Ashley went out again, telling the valet not to sit up for him. Chipps could not say at what time either of the young gentlemen had come home.

"That short visit home—presumably to fetch the revolver—was thought to be very important, and Mr. John Ashley's friends felt that his case was practically hopeless.

"The valet's evidence and that of James Funnell, the constable, who had overheard the conversation near the park railings, were certainly the two most damning proofs against the accused. I assure you I was having a rare old time that day. There were two faces in court to watch which was the greatest treat I had had for many a day. One of these was Mr. John Ashley's.

"Here's his photo—short, dark, dapper, a little 'racy' in style, but otherwise he looks a son of a well-to-do farmer. He was very quiet and placid in court, and addressed a few words now and again to his solicitor. He listened gravely, and with an occasional shrug of the shoulders, to the recital of the crime, such as the police had reconstructed it, before an excited and horrified audience.

"Mr. John Ashley, driven to madness and frenzy by terrible financial difficulties, had first of all gone home in search of a weapon, then waylaid Mr. Aaron Cohen somewhere on that gentleman's way home. The young man had begged for delay. Mr. Cohen perhaps was obdurate; but Ashley followed him with his importunities almost to his door.

"There, seeing his creditor determined at last to cut short the painful interview, he had seized the unfortunate man at an unguarded moment from behind, and strangled him; then, fearing that his dastardly work was not fully accomplished, he had shot twice at the already dead body, missing it both times from sheer nervous excitement. The murderer then must have emptied his victim's pockets, and finding the key of the garden, thought that it would be a safe way of evading capture by cutting across the Squares, under the tunnel, and so through the more distant gate which faced Portland Place.

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"The loss of the revolver was one of those unforeseen accidents which a retributive Providence places in the path of the miscreant, delivering him by his own act of folly into the hands of human justice.

"Mr. John Ashley, however, did not appear the least bit impressed by the recital of his crime. He had not engaged the services of one of the most eminent lawyers, expert at extracting contradictions from witnesses by skilful cross-examinations—oh, dear me, no! he had been contented with those of a dull, prosy, very second-rate limb of the law, who, as he called his witnesses, was completely innocent of any desire to create a sensation.

"He rose quietly from his seat, and, amidst breathless silence, called the first of three witnesses on behalf of his client. He called three—but he could have produced twelve—gentlemen, members of the Ashton Club in Great Portland Street, all of whom swore that at three o'clock on the morning of February 6th, that is to say at the very moment when the cries of 'Murder' roused the inhabitants of Park Square West, and the crime was being committed, Mr. John Ashley was sitting quietly in the club-rooms of the Ashton playing 'Bridge' with the three witnesses. He had come in a few minutes before three—as the hall porter of the Club testified—and stayed for about an hour and a half.

"I need not tell you that this undoubted, this fully proved, *alibi* was a positive bomb-shell in the stronghold of the prosecution. The most accomplished criminal could not possibly be in two places at once, and though the Ashton Club transgresses in many ways against the gambling laws of our very moral country, yet its members belong to the best, most unimpeachable classes of society. Mr. Ashley had been seen and spoken to at the very moment of the crime by at least a dozen gentlemen whose testimony was absolutely above suspicion.

"Mr. John Ashley's conduct throughout this astonishing phase of the inquiry remained perfectly calm and correct. It was no doubt the consciousness of being able to prove his innocence with such absolute conclusion, that had steadied his nerves throughout the proceedings.

"His answers to the magistrate were clear and simple, even on the ticklish subject of the revolver.

"'I left the club, sir,' he explained, 'fully determined to speak with Mr. Cohen alone in order to ask him for a delay in the settlement of my debt to him. You will understand that I should not care to do this in the presence of other gentlemen. I went home for a minute or two—not in order to fetch a revolver as the police assert, for I always carry a revolver about with me in foggy weather—but in order to see if a very important business letter had come for me in my absence.

"'Then I went out again, and met Mr. Aaron Cohen not far from the Harewood Club. I walked the greater part of the way with him, and our conversation was of the most amicable character. We parted at the top of Portland Place, near the gate of the Square, where the policeman saw us. Mr. Cohen then, had the intention of cutting across the Square, as being a shorter way to his own house. I thought the Square looked dark and dangerous in the fog, especially as Mr. Cohen was carrying a large sum of money.

"'We had a short discussion on the subject, and finally I persuaded him to take my revolver, as I was going home only through very frequented streets, and moreover carried nothing that was worth stealing. After a little demur Mr. Cohen accepted the loan of my revolver, and that is how it came to be found on the actual scene of the crime; finally I parted from Mr. Cohen a very few minutes after I had heard the church clock striking a quarter before three. I was at the Oxford Street end of Great Portland Street at five minutes to three, and it takes at least ten minutes to walk from where I was to the Ashton Club.'

"This explanation was all the more credible, mind you, because the question of the revolver had never been very satisfactorily explained by the prosecution. A man who has effectually strangled his victim, would not discharge two shots of his revolver for, apparently no other purpose than that of rousing the attention of the nearest passer-by. It was far more likely that it was Mr. Cohen who shot—perhaps wildly into the air, when suddenly attacked from behind. Mr. Ashley's explanation therefore was not only plausible, it was the only possible one.

"You will understand therefore how it was that after nearly half-an-hour's examination, the magistrate, the police, and the public were alike pleased to proclaim that the accused left the Court without a stain upon his character."

IV.

"Yes," I interrupted eagerly now, since for once, my acumen had been at least as sharp as his, "but suspicion of that horrible

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crime only shifted its taint from one friend to another, and, of course, I know——"

"But that's just it," he quietly interrupted, "you don't know—Mr. Walter Hatherell, of course, you mean. So did everyone else at once. The friend, weak and willing, committing a crime on behalf of his cowardly, yet more assertive friend who had tempted him to evil. It was a good theory; and was held pretty generally, I fancy, even by the police.

"I say 'even' because they worked really hard in order to build up a case against young Hatherell, but the great difficulty was that of time. At the hour when the policeman had seen the two men outside Park Square together, Walter Hatherell was still sitting in the Harewood Club, which he never left until twenty minutes to two. Had he wished to waylay and rob Aaron Cohen he would not have waited surely till the time when presumably the latter would already have reached home.

"Moreover, twenty minutes was an incredibly short time in which to walk from Hanover Square to Regent's Park without the chance of cutting across the squares to look for a man, whose whereabouts you could not determine to within twenty yards or so, to have an argument with him, murder him and ransack his pockets. And then, there was the total absence of motive."

"But——" I said meditatively, for I remembered now that the Regent's Park murder, as it had been popularly called, was one of those which had remained as impenetrable a mystery as any other crime had ever been in the annals of the police.

The man in the corner cocked his funny bird-like head well on one side and looked at me, highly amused evidently at my perplexity.

"You do not see how that murder was committed?" he asked with a grin.

I was bound to admit that I did not.

"If you had happened to have been in Mr. John Ashley's predicament," he persisted, "you do not see how you could conveniently have done away with Mr. Aaron Cohen, pocketed his winnings, and then led the police of your country entirely by the nose, by proving an indisputable *alibi*."

"I could not arrange conveniently," I retorted, "to be in two different places half a mile apart at one and the same time."

"No! I quite admit that you could not do this unless you also had a friend——"

"A friend? But you say——"

"I say that I admired Mr. John Ashley, for his was the head which planned the whole thing, but he could not have accomplished the fascinating and terrible drama without the help of willing and able hands."

"Even then——" I protested.

"Point number one," he began excitedly, fidgeting with his inevitable piece of string. "John Ashley and his friend Walter Hatherell leave the club together, and together decide on the plan of campaign. Hatherell returns to the club, and Ashley goes to fetch the revolver—the revolver which played such an important part in the drama, but not the part assigned to it by the police. Now try to follow Ashley closely, as he dogs Aaron Cohen's footsteps. Do you believe that he entered into conversation with him? That he walked by his side? That he asked for delay? No! He sneaked behind him and caught him by the throat, as the garrotters used to do in the fog. Cohen was apoplectic, and Ashley is young and powerful. Moreover he meant to kill——."

"But the two men talked together outside the Square gates," I protested, "one of whom was Cohen, and the other Ashley."

"Pardon me," he said jumping up in his seat like a monkey on a stick, "there were not two men talking outside the square gates. According to the testimony of James Funnell, two men were leaning arm in arm against the railings and *one* man was talking."

"Then you think that——"

"At the hour when James Funnell heard Holy Trinity clock striking half past two Aaron Cohen was already dead. Look how simple the whole thing is," he added eagerly, "and how easy after that—easy but oh, dear me! how wonderfully, how stupendously clever. As soon as James Funnell has passed on, John Ashley having opened the gate lifts the body of Aaron Cohen in his arms and carries him across the Square. The Square is deserted of course, but the way is easy enough, and we must presume that Ashley had been in it before. Anyway there was no fear of meeting anyone.

"In the meantime Hatherell has left the Club: as fast as his athletic legs can carry him he rushes along Oxford Street and Portland Place. It had been arranged between the two miscreants that the Square gate should be left on the latch.

"Close on Ashley's heels now, Hatherell too cuts across the Square, and reaches the further gate in good time to give his confederate a hand in disposing the body against the railings. Then without another instant's delay Ashley runs back across

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the gardens, straight to the Ashton Club, throwing away the keys of the dead man, on the very spot, where he had made it a point of being seen and heard by a passer-by.

"Hatherell gives his friend six or seven minutes start, then he begins the altercation which lasts two or three minutes, and finally rouses the neighbourhood with cries of 'Murder' and report of pistol in order to establish that the crime was committed at the hour when its perpetrator has already made out an indisputable *alibi*."

"I don't know what you think of it all, of course," added the funny creature, as he fumbled for his coat and his gloves, "but I call the planning of that murder—on the part of novices, mind you—one of the cleverest pieces of strategy I have ever come across. It is one of those cases when there is no possibility whatever now of bringing the crime home to its perpetrator or his abettor. They have not left a single proof behind them; they foresaw everything and each acted his part with a coolness and courage, which applied to a great and good cause would have made fine statesmen of them both.

"As it is, I fear, they are just a pair of young blackguards, who have escaped human justice, and have only deserved the full and ungrudging admiration of yours very sincerely."

He had gone. I wanted to call him back, but his meagre person was no longer visible through the glass door. There were many things I wished to ask of him—what were his proofs, his facts? His were theories after all, and yet somehow, I knew he had solved once again one of the darkest mysteries of great criminal London.

"Point number one," he began.

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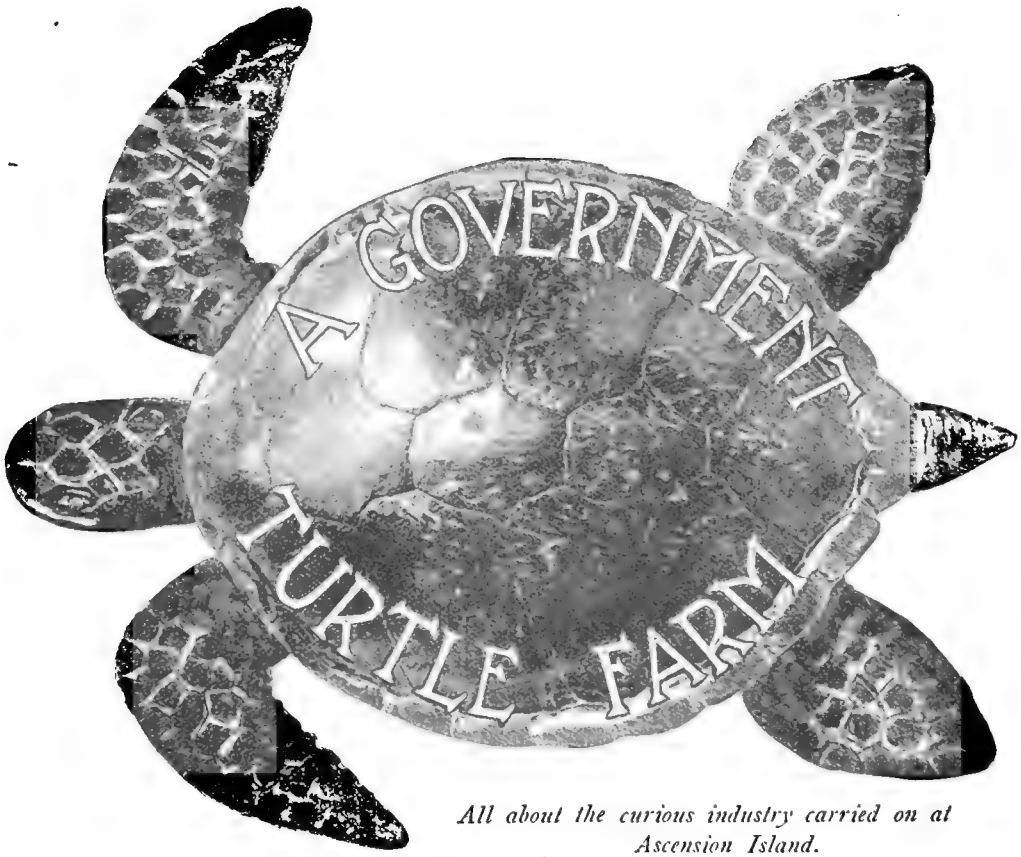

All about the curious industry carried on at Ascension Island.

By Alexander Aiton.

In these go-ahead days we are getting accustomed to municipal enterprise in almost every shape and form, but it is not generally known that among the various enterprises worked by the British Government is that of turtle farming, carried on at Ascension Island.

This island has altogether an area of about thirty-eight square miles, being seven and a half miles long and six miles broad. It has belonged to this country since 1815, being chiefly used as a coaling-station and naval depôt, and also as a sanatorium for the crews of vessels in our navy stationed off the West Coast of Africa. The island is specially suited for this purpose, as, despite its close proximity to the equator, the temperature is low, and the atmosphere healthy on account of the prevailing south-easterly trade winds.

In fact, the island has proved itself to be of the greatest value to this country as a place for recuperation of health for naval officers and seamen, who have been debilitated by malarial fevers contracted during their service on the unhealthy coast of West Africa.

Ascension Island is entirely under the direction of the Lords of the Admiralty, and practically all the inhabitants are either officers, seamen, or marines; and, curiously enough, are appointed by them to the island in exactly the same manner as is observed in commissioning one of Her Majesty's men-of-war. Besides the marines, however, a large number of native Kroomen are enlisted from Sierra Leone for service on Ascension, and these men have a good deal to do with looking after the various Government turtle farms.

At first sight the appearance of Ascension Island is not particularly inviting, as, with the exception of the "Green Mountain," which rises up to a height of 2820ft., it seems to be nothing but a dismal waste of lava left there many hundreds of years ago after the last eruption from the now extinct craters. The

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mountain derives its name from its pleasant contrast to its surroundings, rising up as it does from the centre of the island, and being well covered with a wonderful green cloak afforded by the tropical trees, shrubs, and grass.

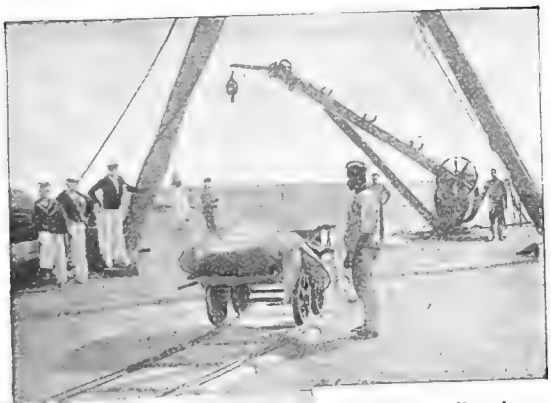
The coast of Ascension Island is one of the most popular resorts of turtles during their laying season, and their habit of returning to it year after year has been a matter of no small comment amongst naturalists, though to a certain extent, of course, this can be accounted for by the attractions of its low, flat, sandy shores. Ascension Island is also the breeding place of a bird called the "soo'y-tern." These birds, which are locally named "wideawakes," from their peculiar cry, visit the island every eight months or so in vast numbers, and their eggs are greatly sought after as a delicacy for the table.

To test the statement made about the turtles' habit of returning to the island year after year, one was once thrown overboard near Honolulu, with the date and location of the throwing cut on the back. Three years and two months afterwards this turtle was "turned up" at Ascension, having travelled over 15,000 miles. More recently still, another was thrown overboard in the English Channel, and was caught again at Ascension within six months.

All turtles caught at Ascension Island are the property of the Crown, and are only sent to England and other places for disposal as directed by the Admiralty, in whose hands, as has been already stated, the government of the whole island practically rests.

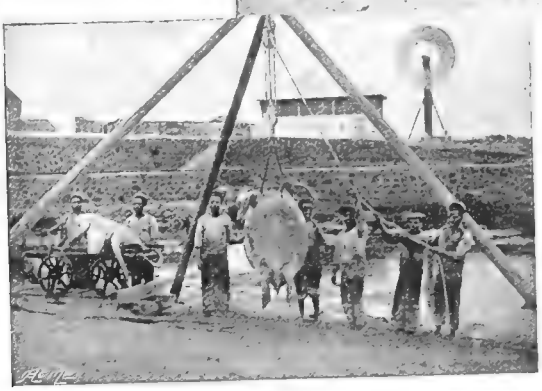
The first of January in each year sees the commencement of the turtle season, which does not, as a rule, last more than three months. The particular species which favours Ascension with its visits is the Chelonia viridis or green turtle. This, as may be supposed, is the turtle from whose green fat and portion of the fins that particular brand of soup is made which is proverbially associated with the banquets of London's civic dignitaries. It is wholly for its value as an edible commodity that the turtle farms are carried on, as the shell, unlike that of the tortoise, is of no commercial value.

There are four sandy beaches in Ascension which are particularly adapted for turtle turning, their gentle slope from the water's edge and softness of surface affording the female turtle every facility for landing and depositing her eggs. All these four landing places, moreover, are situated some distance from any human habitation, as there are few more timid



A trolley on lines bears the turtle to the vessel.

Waiting for his turn.



Weighing the turtle preparatory to shipping him for England.

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"Turning-up" a turtle. Turtles are captured by turning them over on their backs, when it is impossible for them to right themselves again.

creatures than turtles, the least noise being sufficient to frighten them again to the sea for a considerable time.

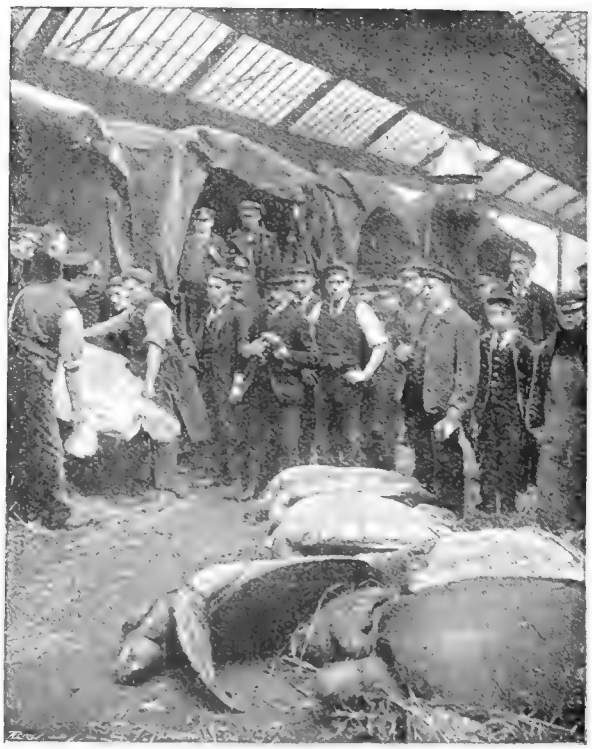
Along the shore a number of huts are built specially for the turning parties to hide in. Two or three times every week a small steam tug makes a journey round the island, landing a boat at each of the huts to convey provisions and water to its occupants and to collect the captured turtles and remove them to the ponds at Georgetown.

As a rule, a turning party only consists of two men, and although the actual turning, as shown in one of the accompanying illustrations, is simple enough, it often entails many days and nights of weary waiting before one of these innocent reptiles appears on the scene, but whenever one does, her fate is sealed. The men usually wait till she has deposited her eggs, or at any rate got well clear of the water's edge, before they rush up and turn her over on to her back, where she lies hopelessly flapping her fins till she is carried into captivity.

The naval officers keep a careful record of all turtles caught, and at the end of the season the turners receive a bonus of *2s.* per head for each one captured. Curiously enough, the turtle seldom, if ever, uses its mouth as a weapon of defence when attacked, but at the same time, it should be remembered that the turners run a very considerable risk of injury from a blow from its powerful fins, which might easily break a limb.

The method of removing the turtles to the steamer prior to their removal to Georgetown is so graphically described in the accompanying illustrations that further account is almost superfluous. The reptile is first dragged into the water and allowed to swim off, her movements being indicated by a floating buoy. When sufficiently deep water is reached, the men in the dinghy tow it off to the steamer, where it is covered with wet sacks till, along with hundreds of its brothers and sisters, it finds a resting place in the turtle ponds.

The two turtle ponds now in use were built in 1856, and everything possible has been done by Her Majesty's Government to keep the turtles contained therein as healthy as



At Waterloo Station—loading the vans of Messrs. Ring and Brymer with the spoil newly arrived from Mauritius.

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possible. Both ponds are opened by sluices to the action of the tides. The larger pond is, roughly speaking, about 100ft. square, with an average depth at high tide of 4½ft. of water; the other pond, which is slightly smaller, differs from this one in that there is a sandy bank at one end for the female captives to lay eggs on. The ponds have afforded naturalists plenty of opportunity to study the habits and peculiarities of these curious reptiles, probably the only ones that are regarded by the people of this country as an edible commodity.

Though the number of eggs laid by each turtle varies very considerably, it is usually between 200 and 250. They are placed in hollows in the sand hollowed out by their fins, after which a thin layer of sand is thrown over them and the kindly sun is left to do the work of foster-mother. After about 100 days or so, when young Miss Turtle arrives in this world of worry, she is only about 3in. in length, and though turtles grow slowly they sometimes reach very large dimensions.

In 1879 one was killed weighing 730lb. —or just about the weight of a full-grown bullock! But judging from the many thousands of young turtles which are hatched every year, and the comparatively small number of full-grown ones caught in a season (250 being looked upon as a very good average), it seems that a large number of young turtles must lose their lives every year either by being eaten by fish and birds of prey or by being dashed to pieces on the rocks in the sea during their early explorations. It will be sad news, moreover, to lovers of turtle soup to know that the cost of this delicacy is more likely to increase than decrease, as the number of turtles captured each successive season appears to be getting smaller. Time was when as many as 800 were caught in a single year at Ascension.

All the turtles hatched in the ponds at Georgetown are liberated in due course. It is estimated that they do not become fully grown until about thirty-five years of age. Whilst in captivity the young ones greatly relish small pieces of raw meat, but when they reach years of discretion their chief items of food are a small species of fine sea-weed, known as turtle grass, and small fish, which they swallow by the shoal.

A task which the Kroomen greatly enjoy is that of going into the ponds to capture a turtle whenever one is required for shipment to London or for some other purpose. This is a task which requires a good deal of skill, as although on land its movements are clumsy and unwieldy, in the water the turtle renders a very different account of itself.

Often enough many exciting chases take place before finally the Kroomen manage to secure their rope to the turtle's fin, and tow it triumphantly to land prior to its setting forth on its long journey to the cellars of Messrs. Ring and Brymer, *en route*, let us hope for the turtle's consolation, to the Guildhall for the Lord Mayor's banquet.

On arrival at Waterloo the turtles are laid out in rows along the platform.

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Tallien's Star.

by C. Arbuthnot.

STELLA, the fair, the starry-eyed, the lily-like, was the daughter of little wizened-up old Monsieur Tallien, who kept the cabaret—ten years or so ago—nearest to the Porte des Ternes, on the right, as one comes from the Bois de Boulogne. Monsieur Tallien is old now, tottering, indeed, on the verge of the grave, and the sweet Stella lies "full fathom five" beneath the deep blue waves. But her story is not yet forgotten in the quartier, and it is so pathetic—poor soul!—that it seems worth the telling.

Her mother had died when Stella was still a little child; she had been brought up entirely by her father, who held her as the apple of his eye. Gentle, silent, deft, I see her now, as she used, day after day, to trip to and fro, from the bar within to the little round iron tables outside, under the acacia trees—always pleasant, always ready.

It was Stella's custom, and had been so for many years, to go every morning before breakfast, with a bowl of strong soup and a pudding, or a freshly baked cake, to the lodging of an old maiden aunt of hers, who lived beyond the Barrier, and was in the very poorest circumstances. And the pleasantest, if not perhaps the shortest way to her aunt's dwelling, lay through the Bois de Boulogne.

One morning, in the fresh, leafy springtime, Stella, passing, basket-laden, through the softly flickering lights and shadows, attracted the attention of an art-student, sketching among the trees. He was struck by her beauty, and indeed, it was exceptional.

"Pardon me," he said advancing, palette in hand. "Mademoiselle will forgive me for addressing her, but if you would have the goodness to sit to me for your portrait, you would confer upon me the greatest of benefits. I am painting a picture of Ophelia, and your face, Mademoiselle, is what I have been seeking for two years."

"Sir," replied Stella sweetly, "I should be only too happy to serve you, but my father would not, I fear, permit."

The artist, however, was not to be repulsed so easily.

"I implore you!" he exclaimed, waving his palette in the air. "Reflect a little, Mademoiselle! Think of my picture, which, without your aid, can never be completed—what a loss to the world! Also there is no necessity to tell your father. It would be, of course, perfectly proper, for you shall pose, if you will, here in this very spot—an affair of half-an-hour daily, and no change of costume!"

Well, he was a black-eyed, square-jawed fellow, and, at last, weak Stella yielded. It is so hard, when one is naturally unselfish, to say continually "no." So day after day, thenceforward, she stood in her simple gown of blue cotton, leaning against a tree; her pale gold hair gleaming in the sunlight, her eyes modestly cast down. And the artist, dark, strong, handsome, worked with a will, so that the portrait progressed grandly.

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Many people passed, and some said:

"See, he is painting his young wife. Men love by contrast."

Others said:

"She cannot be his sister, she must be a paid model."

But most said only:

"How lovely she is!" And so the artist thought; but Stella, intent on her own meditations, heard nothing.

And lo! when at last the picture was done, and Stella, accompanied by her dearest friend Marie-Louise Lambert, went to the artist's studio to see it—for of course only studies had been executed out of doors—why, it was not Ophelia at all, but only little, fragile Stella Tallien, standing among the trees, with her basket at her feet, and all the delicate tendrils of her golden hair fluttering round her face like sweet peas shivering in the wind.

"Am I really like that?" said Stella, and looked at it with a sort of awe.

It was a great success, the picture, and was accepted for the Salon. But by some mischance, the workman, to whom the framing of it was intrusted, was an old friend of Monsieur Tallien, and had known Stella also, all her life. Therefore, when he removed the wrappings—

"Eh, *mon dieu!*" he cried. "But if I do not deceive myself, I have here a fine portrait of the little Tallien! I will run round to the cabaret and congratulate the good man!"

And so the whole story had to be explained to old Tallien, and as he was a shrewd fellow enough, it took him but a very short time to find out that Stella was desperately in love with "this villain painter." And indeed, when directly questioned, she avowed as much, which says a good deal for the truthfulness of her disposition.

Meanwhile, the painter had made but one lover-like speech to Stella.

"I go, *ma mie*," he had said, "back to my country. I am of Norway. But it is not for long—a year at most. I shall be back to see my picture hung next Spring. Then I will take you home with me to Norway. You will come?"

"How good you are!" murmured Stella softly, her blue eyes full of tears. And the painter went away, blessing-laden.

Stella lived on hope all that year, but it is

So day after day, thenceforward, she stood in her simple gown of blue cotton, leaning against a tree.

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not wholesome food. She pined and grew pale. The blue veins showed more clearly at her temples, and her hands became almost transparent. The picture was well hung, and she and her father and Marie-Louise went together to see it; but the real Stella was by now but the shadow of the painted one, so that few would have recognised her for the original.

At last, one day, Stella who had become restless, and often sought peace of mind in taking long walks that were beyond her strength, wandered into one of the long upper-galleries of the Louvre. The statues fascinated her—so white and ghostly. She sat down to rest on a low bench, close by the Venus of Milo, gazing up at those noble features, those calm unseeing eyes, and wondering what manner of woman this might have been, if she had ever lived. Two students were sketching and chatting a short way off. As they talked, suddenly a name she knew struck upon Stella's ear.

"That was a fine picture by Christian Ericcson," one of the men was saying. "He told me, when I dined with him the other day, that he did all the studies for it out of doors, because his model objected to going to his studio."

"So I heard," said the other. "Was he not to have married her at one time? I am certain I heard that from somebody."

"He had, I believe, some mad idea of the kind, but, bah! an innkeeper's daughter! The thing would have been impossible."

"It would have been at least extremely foolish. But when does he return then to Norway?"

"When, *mon dieu!* He is already gone, my dear fellow! I myself saw him off last night from the Gare du Nord."

With a little sigh, Stella fell against the stone wall. She had fainted.

* * * *

When the poor Star had recovered from a bad illness, nothing would suit her but that she must go at once to Norway.

"It is only because he has not seen me for so long," she pleaded. "Once he sees me again, he will be just as fond of me as ever."

Monsieur Tallien raged and swore, and tore his grey hair in vain; Stella, for once, was obdurate. Finally, he said, if she must go, he would go with her. So the little shop by the Porte des Ternes was let. Another maiden served the customers at the tables under the acacia trees; another hand arranged the masses of delicate pink and white blossoms in their big bowls. And Stella, fairer, paler, frailer than ever, started with her sorrowing old father.

Tumble and toss, oh cold, blue, Northern waves! Blow, rough winds of Norway! Keep the little maid from reaching the land of her lover; not happiness, but a great grief there awaits her!

Alas, poor Stella! For the handsome painter kisses now the curls of a new-won bride.

But God and the sea are kind. In a soft grey veil of fog, without fear or warning, suddenly there came a crash—then confusion, noise, and the in-rushing water—black and terrible.

If two good ships had struck, and one was sunk, what of it? For is not gold dross?—while a broken heart, what shall mend? And all were saved, but one.

Pale and fair, down among the mermaids, her long hair tangled with sea-weeds, Stella sleeps in peace till the Judgment Day.

But old Monsieur Tallien?

Ah, it is there, indeed, the sorrow! Look at him now, as he totters down the avenue, under the acacia trees, leaning on his stick, white-haired, feeble! One would take him for eighty. In his heart is always present the image of the lost little one. It is to-day her birthday; he is on his way now to celebrate it, in the Eglise de la Paroisse, where a mass will be sung for her soul. It is a great occasion. See, he wears his best clothes!

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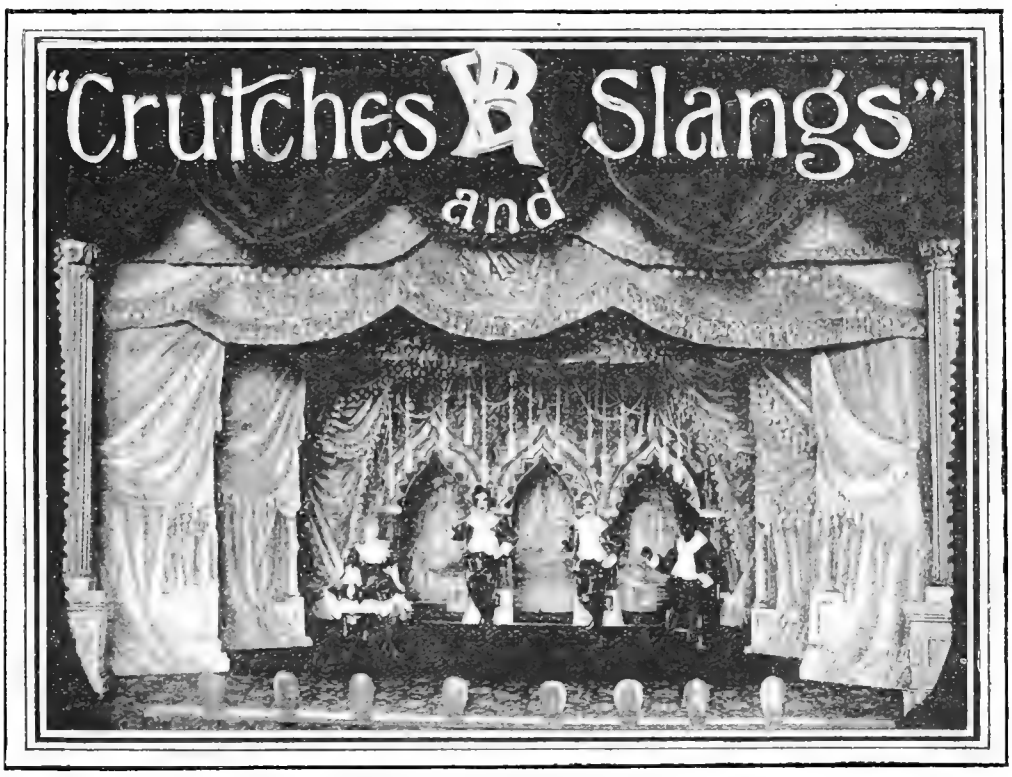

The miniature stage and marionettes as seen by the audience.

Behind the Scenes of a Marionette Show.

By Frank Holmfield.

As everybody knows, marionettes are manipulated by a series of strings from the various joints of their wooden bodies; these strings vary in number according to the importance of the figure, but generally, there are nine strings—and these are technically known as "slangs."

The strings are made of the finest hemp; they must be thin enough to be unobserved by the spectators, and yet strong enough to support a figure thirty inches high, and weighing generally about eight pounds—sometimes more, sometimes less. Each string is dyed a greyish hue—black is more observable. It takes a pair of very keen eyes to notice the strings at a distance of ten yards. In our illustrations the figures have been photographed against a light background, purposely to show the "slangs." At a suitable length from the figure the "slangs" are attached to "crutches," of which there are two to each puppet.

The "crutches" are formed of pieces of strong wood, an inch thick and a foot long. To one "crutch" are attached the "slangs" which move the limbs; to the other are fixed the "slangs" supporting the different parts of the body, as shown in one of the photographs.

We have proof enough that the marionette of to-day was known hundreds of years ago in England, but the antiquity of the little moving figure goes much further back. Its very name is derived from the tiny images of the Virgin—little Marys, although some authorities declare that the derivation is from "morio"—a fool or buffoon. However that may be, there is no denying that the movable puppet dates back to the days of Ancient Egypt, for such figures have been found again and again amidst the ruins of palaces.

Etruria has yielded some specimens. They were common playthings among Greeks, and it was due to that people that the

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figures found their way to Rome. India and China have had their puppet plays from time immemorial.

Throughout Europe the marionette show has provided amusement for all classes of people for many centuries. Goethe did not scorn to give them some attention. Le Sage actually wrote puppet plays as late as 1721. In "Don Quixote" we read of a "curious puppet show which represents the play of Melisanda and Don Gayferos."

Good morning!

Want a ride on my back?

Not if I know it!

Good bye!

In England during the sixteenth century, puppets were used in religious plays such as "The Prodigal Son," and "The Fall of Nineveh," with "Jonah and the Whale." At Bartholomew Fair in 1641, it is recorded that a puppet show was one of the most popular of the entertainments provided, Pepys stating (1667) that he found my Lady Castlemaine at a puppet play called "Patient Grizill"!

Powell, the Sanger of the period, carried about a wonderful marionette show to all parts of England, and was the subject of an interview—fancy interviews at that time!—in the *Spectator*, 1711.

So the marionette has gone on and prospered in England ever since. Between twenty and thirty years ago, a good French modeller named Theodore introduced some wonderful improvements in the mechanism of the figures, and we find the first-class shows of to-day possessing figures, whose life-like movements and perfection of manipulation are often so delusive as to cause the spectator to doubt if they are only puppets moved with "crutches and slangs."

Take, for instance, that excellent entertainment of the Barnard family, which is known in every big town on the Continent, and towns great and small in England. For a quarter of a century "Barnard's Marionettes" have been hard at work adding to the

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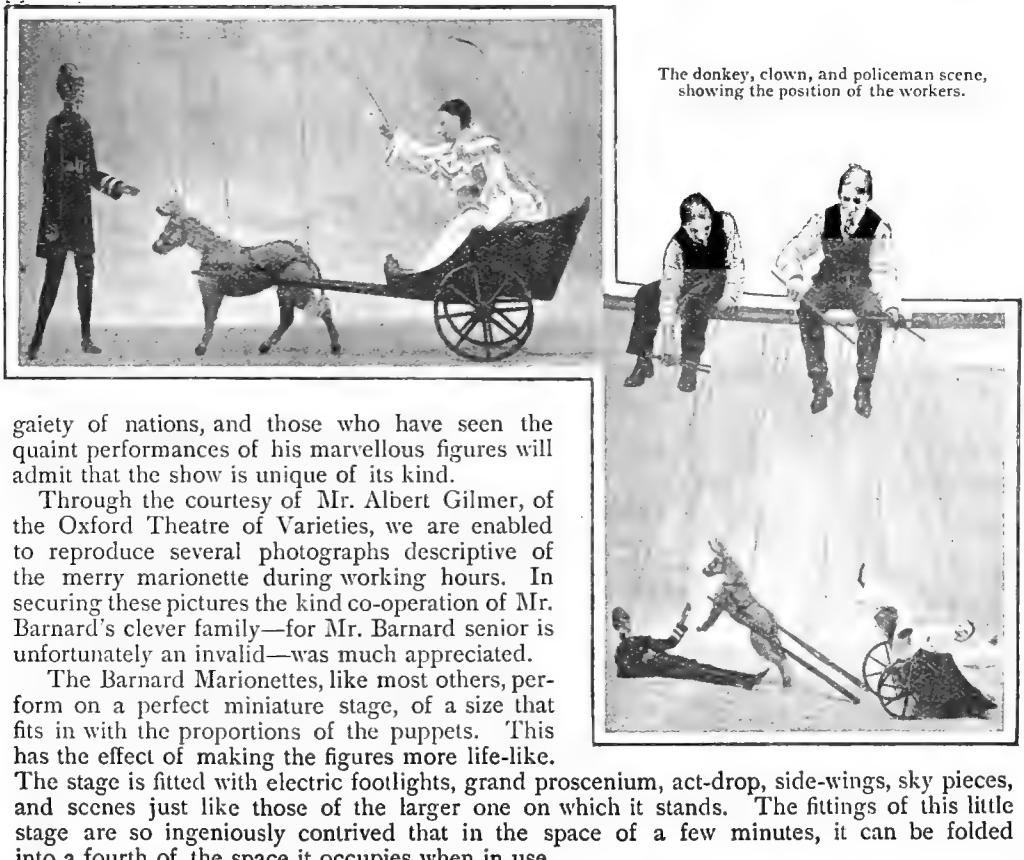
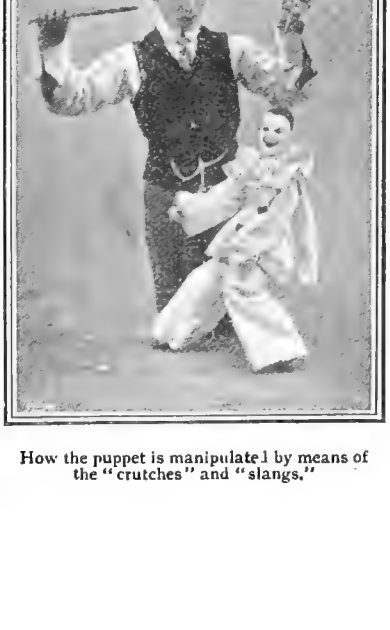


The donkey, clown, and policeman scene, showing the position of the workers.

gaiety of nations, and those who have seen the quaint performances of his marvellous figures will admit that the show is unique of its kind.

Through the courtesy of Mr. Albert Gilmer, of the Oxford Theatre of Varieties, we are enabled to reproduce several photographs descriptive of the merry marionette during working hours. In securing these pictures the kind co-operation of Mr. Barnard's clever family—for Mr. Barnard senior is unfortunately an invalid—was much appreciated.

The Barnard Marionettes, like most others, perform on a perfect miniature stage, of a size that fits in with the proportions of the puppets. This has the effect of making the figures more life-like. The stage is fitted with electric footlights, grand proscenium, act-drop, side-wings, sky pieces, and scenes just like those of the larger one on which it stands. The fittings of this little stage are so ingeniously contrived that in the space of a few minutes, it can be folded into a fourth of the space it occupies when in use.



How the puppet is manipulated by means of the "crutches" and "slangs."

The stage differs very little, as we have said, from the ordinary structure. But at the back, immediately behind the backcloth, is erected a platform three feet high, and running across the width of the stage. On this platform stand the manipulators of the figures, one to each puppet.

The workers' heads and shoulders are well above the top of the scene, where there is a batten on which they lean, or rest their arms. In the left hand is held the "crutch" with the "slangs" supporting the body; in the right, the "crutch" which governs the movements of the limbs. Almost needless to say, the experience necessary to manipulate the figures in a life-like style must be considerable. In the case of the Barnard family —two young men and a young lady—there is only one word that can describe their work: perfection.

As the figures make their entrances, perform the various movements, and make their exits, the workers must shift their positions on the platform, working from left to right or *vice versâ* as occasion demands. Sometimes, of course, it is necessary for the "crutches" to change hands from the first workers to the second and third, and all this must be done while the figure progresses with an easy and natural step from one side of the stage to the other; and at the same time the

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second and third figures must be kept in motion and the dialogue continued. Only those who have been at the wings, in full view of the workers, can appreciate the marvellous agility and nimbleness with which the "crutches" and their many strings change hands. From the front the audience would not know but that the one marionette is always manipulated throughout its "act" by the same pair of hands.

Our photographs will give the reader some idea of the difficult posing of figures; the extraordinary, yet natural positions of their limbs. It will readily be believed that frequently each finger of the manipulated hands holds the string at a different angle; yet this is done so easily, so smoothly, by the Barnard family as to appear almost effortless. But what with the weight of the figures and the sometimes cramped positions of the marionette worker's body, an hour of string-pulling is by no means an easy one—and the Barnards often give an entertainment lasting longer than that. They play pantomimes, sketches, and harlequinades.

The circus clown —

The workers, while moving the figures, carry on the dialogue, and sing songs, duets, and choruses. So perfect are the figures that even their mouths move in a perfectly natural way when they are supposed to be talking or singing! Under the clever fingers of the string-pullers, each figure can perform prodigies of dancing, wire-walking, and other most intricate movements.

The Barnards have often performed before Royalty — on the Continent particularly —

— quite at home —

— in all positions.

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for they are much sought after by the younger scions of Royal Families.

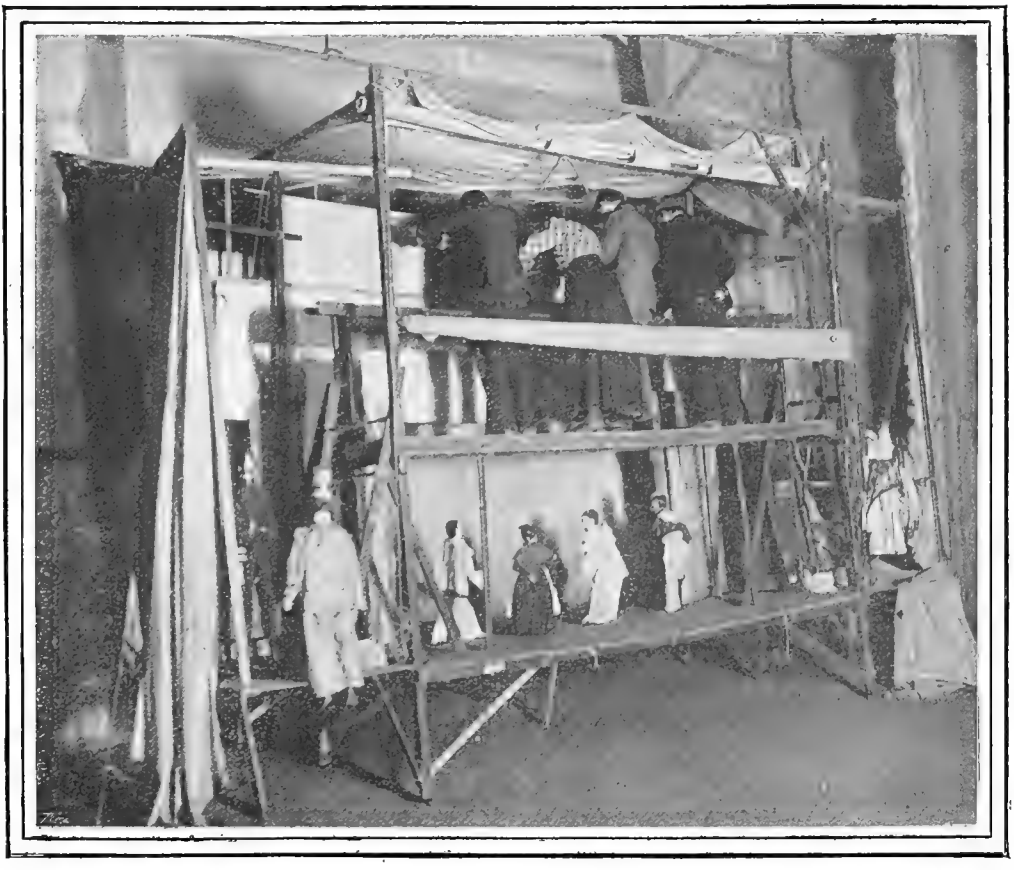
Mr. Barnard's life has been by no means an uneventful one. He has travelled through many strange lands, and met with troublous times, like others in his profession. He has performed for princely remuneration, and also for nothing, as happened in a case where he had accepted a Continental engagement and at very great expense travelled to Belgium to fulfil his contract.

He provided a full evening's entertainment for an entire week. Saturday night came and "treasury" was sought. But alas and alack! The manager who had engaged him had decamped with every farthing of the week's takings, and Mr. Barnard and his numerous assistants were left stranded in a strange country! Not only that, but the proprietors of the theatre at which the performances were given seized everything belonging to the unfortunate Englishman. Marionettes, stage, "properties," and personal luggage—all were annexed according to the law of the land.

And not until he had paid every farthing due by the rascal who had "sloped" was he allowed to make the best of his way back to his native land. The Barnard family are still looking out for that bogus manager!

On the other hand, more humorous experiences have fallen to the lot of the marionette monarch. Take the following instance.

During a child-murdering epidemic in Liverpool some years ago, he was making his way home from the theatre when he was suddenly pounced upon by a couple of detectives, who demanded to know what he had in the basket he was carrying. They would not be satisfied until they saw the contents; their cry of horror as half-a-dozen "babies" were disclosed to view, was only equalled by their grunt of dissatisfaction when they found they had not captured a real baby murderer!



A glimpse behind the scenes, showing the raised platform on which the workers of the puppets stand.

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A LUCKY DIP . . .

BY A. T. G. PRICE.

How I fell in love with Lilian Bradley has nothing to do with the point of the story. I could no more help it than I could have helped being born. I was in Mr. Bradley's office, and he asked me to his house, because our respective grandfathers had been office boys, or had been at Eton together—I forget which, but it does not matter—and there I saw Lilian, and from that moment ceased to be a free agent.

At our third meeting she acknowledged that the feeling was mutual. And then Mr. Bradley found out all about it, and there was an awful row. He forbade me to enter his house, and tried to make me promise never to speak to Lilian again. Of course I refused, and, as was only to be expected, I was given a quarter's salary and dismissed on the spot. For awhile I behaved as any other young man who was desperately in love would have done. I tried to communicate with Lilian, but my letters were returned unopened. I vainly haunted all the places where I was likely to meet her, only to discover at last that she had been sent abroad under the care of two rigid old martinets of aunts, who were as ignorant of anything connected with love as a barrack-room doorpost.

However, before she was spirited away, she contrived to send me a short note, promising to be faithful to me for ever, and on this I lived for some weeks. Then, as time went by, it began to occur to me that I had better look out for some more substantial means of subsistence, and I set about answering advertisements and applying for situations. For a long time I was unsuccessful, and I had begun to despair of ever getting anything to do, when quite unexpectedly, and at the recommendation of a chance acquaintance, I got a berth in an insurance office at Folkestone.

The salary was only half the amount I had got with old Bradley, and the hours were long, but after six months of inforced idleness I was only too glad to drop into anything. I was to begin work in a couple of days, so, before returning to town, I thought I might as well look round for some diggings. As it was the middle of the summer, I found the prices were alarmingly high, and I soon left the more fashionable quarters, and began to explore the dull, narrow streets of the old town. And then suddenly something occurred which put all thoughts of lodgings out of my head.

As I had gone up and down the different streets, I had several times passed a queer-looking old woman. She was dressed in a shabby, voluminous skirt, a heavy, old-fashioned mantle, and a huge bonnet which covered the greater part of her head. Once or twice she had looked as if she was going to speak to me, and then had hesitated. At length, as I was debating before an apartment card in a dingy, sunless road, which looked as if it were inhabited by nothing but depressed bank clerks, she came up and spoke to me.

"James," she said huskily, "don't you know me?"

I immediately concluded that she had been drinking, and turned away. My name is

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James, but, of course, I thought it was only by accident that she had fixed on it.

She seized my arm convulsively.

"I suppose you don't recognise me in these confounded togs," she said with a faint attempt at mirth. "On the whole I'm glad you don't."

I looked at her more fixedly, and then started back.

"Mr. Bradley!" I exclaimed in astonishment.

"Yes, it's me right enough," he answered with a sickly grin.

"But how—why—?"

"Oh, it's a sort of thing that might happen to anyone," he interrupted. "I was bathing up the shore towards Sandgate, and some rascally boys ran away with my clothes and left me these instead."

"Then I suppose they've given yours to some old woman," I said, with difficulty repressing an hysterical feeling as I gazed at the odd figure before me.

"I daresay they have, but that doesn't make it any better for me. I can't run all over the place searching for an old woman dressed in my clothes. And if I found her, I don't know how we could manage to exchange."

"It would certainly be difficult," I admitted gravely.

"And I don't know a soul in the place," he went on. "I came over by the early boat, and sent my bag on, meaning to follow by the afternoon express. And, of course, my watch and all my money went with my clothes, so I was in a nice muddle. But it's all right now I've met you. You won't refuse to help me, will you?" he went on pleadingly. "I daresay I was rather hard on you, but—but—"

"Of course I shall be glad to render you any assistance in my power," I answered loftily as he hesitated.

He looked intensely relieved and shook my hand fervently.

"Thank you, thank you, my dear boy," he said. "Then will you get me some decent clothes and lend me enough to pay my fare up to town?"

I shook my head dubiously.

"I've only got half a sovereign," I said. "And I'm as much a stranger here as you are."

His face fell.

"Then what can I do?" he exclaimed in despair.

"Why not try the police?" I suggested.

"And have them applying to my wife to make sure I wasn't an imposter! I wouldn't have the affair get to her ears for a thousand pounds."

"Then the only plan I can think of is for you to come up to town with me and stop at my lodgings till I can get you some clothes," I said slowly. An idea had suddenly occurred to me, but it would require time to think it out.

"I suppose it's the only thing I can do," he answered ruefully. "But I wish I could have got out of these clothes first. However, I don't suppose anyone will recognise me, as you didn't. There's a pretty good train at three, I believe. We can't go by the four-thirty, as that's the one they expect me by, and my wife and Lil—my daughter—promised to come and meet me at Charing Cross."

Little did he think he was supplying

"James," she said huskily, "don't you know me?"

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me with the piece of information that I most desired!

"Then we shall have an hour and a half to wait," I said, looking at my watch. "Where would you like to go to in the meanwhile?"

"Well, I have been walking about all the morning," he said hesitatingly, "and I haven't had anything to eat since my early breakfast on the steamer."

"Then, of course, you must be hungry," I agreed quickly. Somehow every time he spoke he made the way easier for the carrying out of my plot. "I know of a nice little place near the station. Will you take my arm?"

If the case had not been so peculiar, and my mind had not been so entirely occupied in arranging the details of the plan by which I hoped not only to retrieve my ill-luck of the last six months, but even to turn the tables on Mr. Bradley, and make myself entire master of the situation, I think I should have hesitated before I suggested taking a promenade through a fashionable watering-place in his company, as he certainly looked the most dilapidated and frowsy specimen of old womanhood anyone could well imagine.

However, under the circumstances, I shouldn't have cared if he had been "dressed" as an Ancient Briton or a burlesque actress! Several people turned to look at us as we ascended the hill towards the town, and when we regained the more frequented streets the attention we attracted increased every moment, till at last it became quite embarrassing.

Errand boys regarded us with an astonishment which they made no attempt to conceal, but imparted to one another in language which was generally the reverse of delicate and complimentary, and several cabmen quite surpassed themselves by the facetiousness of their remarks, three of them joining in a chorus of admiration at the beauties they discovered in the face and figure of my "fair" charge.

But this was nothing to the attention we received from a troupe of nigger minstrels, in the midst of which we suddenly found ourselves as we turned a corner.

"'Tis she, 'tis she!" cried one of them in a voice of ecstasy, breaking off in the middle of his song and kneeling at Mr. Bradley's feet. "My own, my love, why have you lingered so long?" And he made a clutch at Mr. Bradley's hand.

"Get out of the way, and don't be a fool," growled Mr. Bradley, as he bent his head, and endeavoured to shade his face with his bonnet as much as possible.

"For shame, Alphonso! Cease to annoy the fair one. Do you not see that she is now on her honeymoon?" came in tones of rebuke from the mandoline player, whose mouth was painted down into an expression of settled melancholy. "You must learn to sorrow silently. I, too, have loved and lost."

Luckily at this moment a char-a-banc, driven by an apparently tipsy coachman, dashed by and scattered the crowd, and in the confusion I managed to drag Mr. Bradley round a corner and down a quiet alley, where we paused for a few moments to regain our breath.

"Couldn't you manage to walk a little faster?" I asked when he took my arm again, and we prepared to resume our way. Mr. Bradley groaned.

"It's these cursed shoes," he murmured as he leant more heavily on my arm, and stuck out one foot from beneath his petticoats for my inspection, and I then saw that he was wearing dirty, white satin slippers, with pointed toes and very high heels. For a moment I felt quite sorry for him, but then I remembered how he had treated me six months before, and my heart hardened again.

However, I dissembled, and appeared to sympathise with him, and then, by keeping to back streets, we at length managed to make our way without any further adventure to a little second-rate restaurant near the station, where, having ordered a substantial meal, I left him and went off on the plea of having to fetch my bag. Once outside, I flew as fast as I could to the post office and sent off several telegrams, and then I hurried to the lodgings of the chance acquaintance, by whose help I had secured my new berth. For it had occurred to me that he was just the same height and build as Mr. Bradley!

My friend was at home, and willingly lent me some clothes when I explained the situation, and in less than an hour I was back at the restaurant, where I found Mr. Bradley anxiously awaiting me. I had taken the precaution of not paying the bill, and I observed that the waiter was keeping a tight eye on him.

"I wish I could have got a veil," he said nervously, as we entered the station.

"Oh, it's quite safe," I said soothingly. "And I'll try to get an empty carriage."

I had very little difficulty in doing this, as there were very few people going by the train. At one station a woman with several children tried to force an entrance, but I told her that my mamma was ill, and hinted darkly at infection, which made her back away from

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the door in double quick time. The train was a slow one for the first part of the journey, but it improved later on, and finished up with a forty minutes run into Charing Cross. When we had left the last stopping place behind us and were still in undisputed possession of the carriage, I breathed more freely. It was now time to throw off the mask. I moved from my place and sat down opposite to Mr. Bradley.

"Do you remember the last conversation we had together, six months ago?" I began.

"Well — er — yes," he answered nervously.

"What telegrams?" he asked, with a mystified expression.

"And do you still hold to the opinions you expressed then?"

"As regards my daughter my decision is unalterable," he answered. "But, after the service you have rendered me, I shall be willing to receive you back into my office, and all arrears of salary shall be paid as if you had never left me."

"And is this your final decision?"

"It is."

"Then I'm glad I sent those telegrams," I said blandly.

"What telegrams?" he asked with a mystified expression.

"To Mrs. Bradley and Lilian," I answered, "asking them to meet this train."

He sprang to his feet.

"Good Heavens, they mustn't see me like this," he exclaimed wildly.

"But there's no help for it," I answered coldly. "The train doesn't stop till it reaches Charing Cross. The only thing you can do is to put your bonnet straight."

He sat down and gazed despairingly out of the window.

"And I also wired to your head clerk, Mr. Wilson, to meet you, and I told him to bring Tomkins, the office boy. I thought it would amuse him."

Mr. Bradley groaned, and I left him to his thoughts for five minutes. Then I returned to the charge.

"Inside that bag," I remarked, "is a suit of clothes, and a shirt and a hat, and everything else that you require to make you presentable."

He looked up and gave a long gasp of relief.

"Then you were only joking?" he exclaimed. "I might have known that you wouldn't be so heartless."

"Yes, I was only joking," I said emphatically. "But I joke on one condition. You can guess what it is?"

"Lilian?" he murmured feebly.

"Yes, the clothes are yours if you will give your unqualified consent to our engagement. But it must be in writing." And I produced a pen and ink and paper.

For some while he held out and tried to get me to accept less binding and satisfactory terms, but I was firm, and when the minutes had lessened to a quarter of an hour, he surrendered unconditionally, and I unlocked the bag. And by the time the train crossed the Thames he was looking very spick and span in my friend's clothes, and the hated feminine garments were safely concealed beneath the seats. Mrs. Bradley and Lilian were on the platform, as well as Mr. Wilson and Tomkins. They all looked very surprised to see me.

"I've brought an old friend back with me, my dear," said Mr. Bradley to his wife. "And he's coming home to dinner with us. Lilian, you remember Mr. Mortimer?"

Lilian gave a rapid glance from her father to me, and then advanced with an exclamation of pleasure. And in face of everyone I put my arm round her and kissed her.

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The new telegraph instrument being operated.

THE LATEST ELECTRICAL WONDER.

Handwriting and Sketches produced simultaneously hundreds of miles away from the Transmitter.

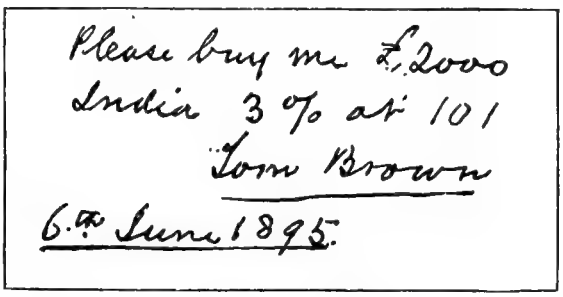
By H. J. Holmes.

Photographs by A. J. Campbell, Creed Lane, E.C.

It was not until twenty years ago that any serious attempt was made to transmit handwriting by the aid of electricity and wires. The introduction of the telephone revolutionised the ordinary modes of transacting business. A distinct want arose for some instrument to record the fleeting words and figures of important messages, such as orders for goods, sale or purchase of stock, etc.

The brains of the cleverest electricians have been busily engaged on the subject for some years, with the result that several kinds of handwriting transmitting machines have seen the light. Their practical use, however, has been somewhat limited, for various reasons.

The late Member of Council of the Institution of Civil Engineers, Mr. E. A. Cowper, originated a form of handwriting transmission



A typical commercial note transmitted in facsimile.

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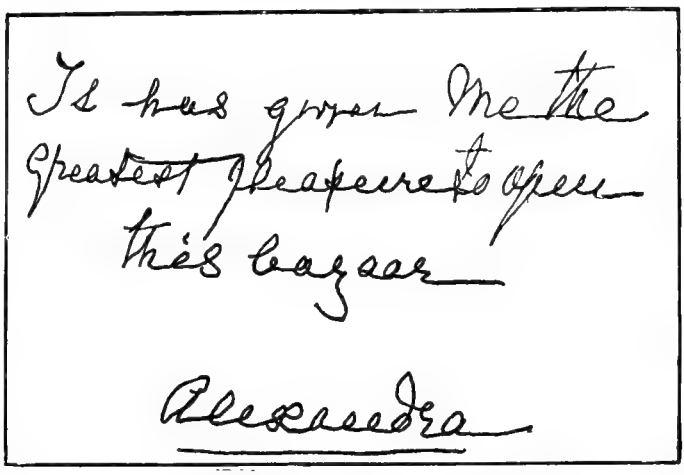
machine giving fairly satisfactory results.

In 1891 Professor Elihu Gray exhibited an instrument called the telautograph at the Chicago Exhibition. It was constructed very much on the same lines of Mr. Cowper's invention, but was considerably improved. In June, 1894, the Professor's instrument was exhibited at a conversazione of the Royal Society. It proved to be too complicated for ordinary commercial purposes.



A message telegraphed by Queen Alexandra.

For the past six years, therefore, Mr. Ritchie, the well-known American electrician and inventor, has entirely devoted his brains to the production of a really practical telautograph. His work has been carried out in London, and complete triumph has at length attended his efforts. He has produced an instrument which is pronounced by experts to be the simplest and yet the most effective of anything of a similar class. The drawbacks of Professor Gray's machine have been eliminated, and Mr. Ritchie's wonderful piece of mechanism seems to be almost human in its work.

When one sees the pen of the receiving instrument at work, reproducing in every minute detail the handwriting or sketch conveyed to the transmitter by the operator, one is inclined to think that the movements are made by an invisible hand; the pen's variations, on or off the receiving sheet, being exactly those made by the writer, 200 miles away!

The photographs reproduced will give the reader a good idea of the construction of this marvellous machine. Upon the transmitter an ordinary lead pencil is used. Near the point of the pencil two delicately made rods are joined. These rods are connected with the instrument, and, following the motions of the pencil made by the operator, regulate the current impulses which control the recording pen of the receiver at the other end. The writing is done upon a roll of ordinary paper five inches wide.

The paper is moved forward by touching a button at the transmitting end, a corresponding movement taking place instantaneously at the receiving end when room for a fresh line is required. The message is produced upon the roll of paper at the receiving end precisely as it is written by the operator on the transmitter. Two aluminium arms support a short glass pen at their junction. This pen follows precisely the movements of the pencil at the transmitting station, and at the end of each line it automatically springs back to its original position to the left of the recording roll, ready, as the latter moves forward, to form the words of the succeeding line.

As the pen springs backward from the last letter formed upon the completed line, it automatically dips into a small reservoir of ink,

Drawings by Harry Furniss as received after transmission by the new instrument.

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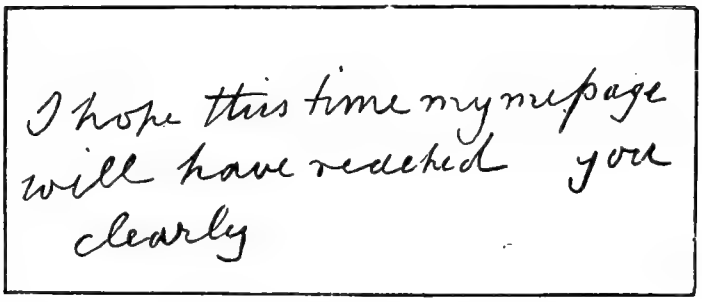
taking up a fresh supply.

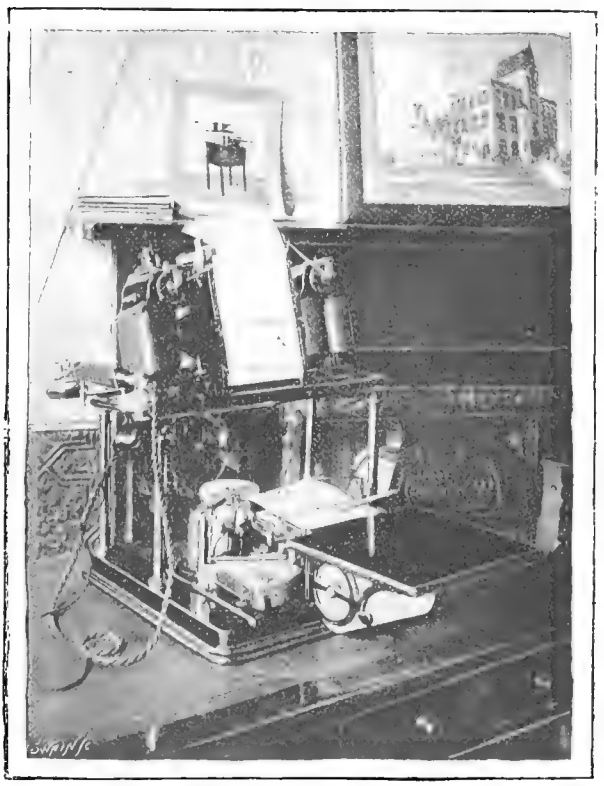
The reservoir may be seen to the left of the recording roll. This renewal of ink in the pen is one of the mechanical triumphs of the telautograph. As the pen passes over each line it produces, in facsimile, the formation of letters, words, figures, signs, or sketches, at the operator's will. A column of newspaper "copy" is reproduced with as much distinctness as an ordinary single figure or sign, and a "line" drawing with all the detail an artist may care to put into it.



A message written and sent by the King.

We are enabled to give one or two "lightning" cartoons, which, like the specimens of messages also reproduced, were "wired" over a distance of 200 miles. Two ordinary telephone wires are used. Facsimile messages between London and Paris have been successfully transmitted. The greatest distance over which messages have been sent up to the time of writing is 600 miles, being then quite readable. The operating of the instrument is so simple that any person who can write can use it.

Used in conjunction with the telephone, as the telautograph is meant to be, its advantages for commercial purposes are obvious. In the first place, the record of any important message is permanent. A message may be written down whether a person is there to read it at the time or not, and perfect secrecy may be attained by placing the recording instrument in a locked case.



The transmitter and receiver.

Business people recognise the impossibility of proving the authenticity of a telephone message without witnesses, or rather listeners, at both ends. The telautograph is the solution of the difficulty. Messages can be sent over the same wires used for the telephone.

It is anticipated that the telautograph will revolutionise the present system of telegraphic communications for military purposes. The weak points of the present system employed in campaigns are many, including the impossibility of personal communication between officers without the aid of skilled operators; the consequent absence of secrecy in the transmission of the most vital messages; the necessity of using telegraphic language, with its liability to error; the want of means of identifying the sender or receiver of a message; and the impossibility of conveying clearly in a new country, by words alone, the positions of an enemy.

The telautograph system has none of these drawbacks; it possesses a special power of its own.

The first point of superiority to

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Sketches by Melton Prior as received over the wire.

be noticed is that no skilled operator is required. A secret written by one officer to another remains a secret. It is sent silently, therefore no spies can possibly obtain information so often given away by the telegraphic Morse code, which speaks aloud to anyone who understands it. Even when out of sight the spy can hear its betraying dots and dashes.

Then, again, officers would recognise each other's handwriting, thus preventing an enemy impersonating a friend in order to receive valuable information.

"Tapping" is of no avail unless the "tapper" has a machine identical with those at the ends of the wires.

A map can be drawn on the transmitter, with all the details as to movements of troops and positions of enemy shown at a glance. This alone ought to give the telautograph a big position in future campaigns.

If necessary, the same wires may be used for telephonic or telegraphic communication, or *vice versâ*. In the words of a retired Colonel of the R.E., "It may be confidently predicted that so soon as the telautograph fulfils certain technical military requirements it must completely supersede the system now in use."

In the pursuit of criminals it may be taken as a certainty that the telautograph will take a place in Scotland Yard annals. When the portrait of a "wanted" can be flashed to every portion of the kingdom in the course of a few minutes, the cause of law and justice will have a powerful ally in this wonderful instrument.

To sum up its superiority over other methods of transmitting messages:—it is safer than the ordinary telegraph, as it is worked on no universal code, and can, if necessary, be locked up out of reach of all who are too inquisitive.

Its advantages over the telephone are no less important, for it furnishes authentic proof that the person at the other end of the wire is who he pretends to be.

Even the much-vaunted wireless telegraphy has to go down before it in some respects, as more information can often be conveyed by one small sketch than by pages of description. It will undoubtedly not be long before the telautograph comes into general use and effects a saving of time in a hundred ways.

Some more of Harry Furniss's sketches.

Google

Author of "A Philatelist," "The Spectre of the Severn Tunnel," "Goodbye Summer," etc.

I.

MADEMOISELLE stepped back a pace, her cheeks crimson. We were standing under the great chestnut tree, she and I, and the sunlight gleaming through the branches flecked her summer gown with light. Across the golden meadows the grey walls of the old chateau rose majestically from its surrounding terraces. At that moment I hated it; those aristocratic towers were a silent reproach to myself, a poor dependent, who had dared to make love to his master's daughter. To love her was excusable, it would have been impossible to avoid it; to tell her so was another matter, and a few hours previously would have seemed incredible to myself, yet a short time passed under the influence of her charming personality, and the words had slipped from me almost unawares, and now I stood awaiting the chilling reproof which should teach her father's secretary his proper place.

Apparently Mademoiselle's scorn was too great to be expressed in words, for she did not speak, and a great bitterness overwhelmed me. Waif as I had been, dependent on the bounty of the Comte de Clermont, much opportunity had been afforded me to study the great social questions which were even then agitating France, and as I grew there had grown with me the resolve to champion the cause of the oppressed against the oppressors. It was indeed an irony of fate that I should have learnt to love one of the proudest of that class which I longed to overthrow.

The silence stung me now.

"The time may come, Mademoiselle," I cried hotly, "when an honest love will be a matter for glory rather than shame."

To my amazement she raised her eyes, and spoke with a delicious shyness.

"Perhaps, Monsieur, the time is already come."

As I sprang forward she stopped me with a gesture.

"The world would call your love madness," she said gravely. "I do not deny that great changes are taking place, daily, hourly, and that things that were once impossible are now accomplished facts, yet the traditions of centuries cannot be swept aside in one day. If I encourage your love, Monsieur, you must give me your word that your heart is with us, not with these agitators."

It was now my turn to be silent; the woman I loved, the cause I served, must I choose between them?

Mademoiselle continued:

"Rumour says you have attended their meetings, and have applauded the riots which now convulse Paris. A moment ago you said I came before everything in your heart. If this is so, you will give up these mad fancies, for my sake."

"Mademoiselle," I burst out, "I love, I adore you, but I cannot do what you wish. . . . I am pledged . . . it is my honour you ask."

For a moment her face hardened, then she smiled, and held out both her hands.

"For my sake—Raoul," she whispered.

Every pulse in my body throbbed madly: she was usually the proudest woman in the world, and I loved her. I took her gently in my arms.

"Leonie, don't ask it. I cannot."

She raised her eyes slowly to mine; for

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one moment I resisted, and then I bent and our lips met.

"And now," she murmured, "you will not refuse."

"My sweet, I cannot break my word."

"Raoul," she said, "I love you."

The temptation was terrible; it was agony to feel her drawing back from my encircling arms, yet I dared not stop her. A vision of miserable pinched faces came between me and my love's pleading eyes; my mind was made up, but the moment was very bitter. Mademoiselle saw my decision in my face, and the colour rushed to her cheeks.

"Then I am to understand, Monsieur," she said in a voice that cut me like a knife, "that a few bourgeois are in your eyes of more importance than Leonie de Clermont? Yet you dared say you loved me, and I—Ah, Mon Dieu!" she broke off, "if I were a man I would kill you for this insult!"

"Mademoiselle—. . . Leonie, let me speak," I pleaded, but she went on furiously.

"Be silent! Have you not humiliated me enough? To think I should have stooped so low, . . . Monsieur, for pity's sake go — . . . I pray Heaven I may never see your face again!"

She turned and walked swiftly in the direction of the chateau, and I watched the small figure till the intervening trees hid it from my sight. Mademoiselle was a good specimen of the creed of the old nobility, on pride she had been reared, pride of race and name, which sets such things higher than any virtue, and would prefer an exclusive Hell to a Heaven stocked with bourgeois.

II.

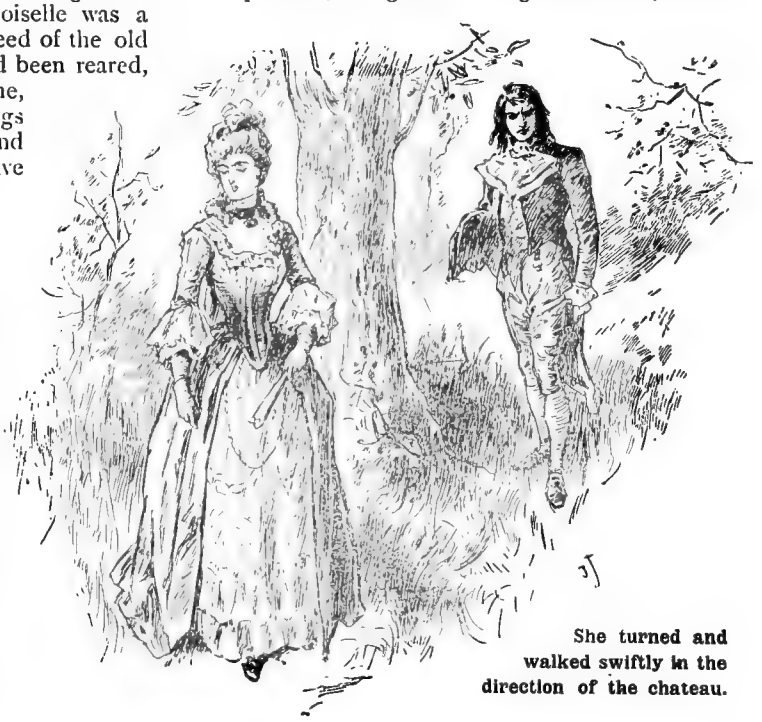
Life is a stern teacher, who sets us hard lessons, of which the hardest is disillusion. It came to me as it was bound to come to every patriot in the year 1794. To have sacrificed everything for a tortured, distressed people is one thing, to have done so for a mob of murderers is quite another, and that is what I had done.

My worldly prospects were much improved, for by a lucky chance I had had the good fortune to be of service to Danton. I disliked the man, but these were not times to disdain a friend in power; Paris was in the hands of the mob, the King was guillotined, and those who had supported the Revolution in its infancy were now reaping their reward. Up to now I had tried to shut my eyes to the terrible abuses of that new found power; I remembered the sufferings of centuries, and if the innocent sometimes shared the fate of the guilty I consoled myself with the thought that in great crises individuals must be sacrificed to the majority. It was, however, ordained that my eyes should be opened by means of an event which was to alter the whole course of my life.

Of the family of the Comte de Clermont I had heard little, and believed that they had escaped to England, but I was suddenly undeceived. It was in Danton's house, where I had returned after transacting some business in the provinces, and he handed me a list of those who were to die by the guillotine that morning. Third on the list I read the name de Clermont.

"Yes, it is the same," he said in reply to my question—"a pretty woman, but Liberty exacts some sacrifices," and he laughed brutally.

In a moment my mind was made up, I pleaded, I urged his obligation to me, I told



She turned and walked swiftly in the direction of the chateau.

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him I loved her. Danton was in a good humour that morning, and he wrote the pardon.

"But you will have to hurry, my friend, if you would snatch your beauty from the embraces of Madame Guillotine. She must even now be leaving the Conciergerie."

I have a blurred recollection of dashing through the streets, of diving through the crowd, shoving, elbowing, cursing. Arrived at last I took in the scene at a glance; the tumbril was drawn up, the victims stood huddled together at the foot of the platform, and around them surged the mob, every face eagerly turned in the direction of the scaffold.

Was I too late? No, for standing proudly erect, gazing at the mob with superb disdain stood Mademoiselle de Clermont. Her name was the next called; I sprang forward and reached the scaffold as she mounted it.

"A pardon," I cried loudly, "the citoyenne is pardoned! See, it is Danton's seal."

The mob growled like some hungry beast robbed of its prey, while the prisoner's guards and the executioner examined the document with doubt and disappointment. It is possible that the pardon would have been disputed had not Danton himself appeared striding through the crowd. He was at the moment the people's idol, and their mutterings changed to cheers for himself and the woman he had delighted to honour. I turned to Mademoiselle who was seemingly dazed at the new turn of events.

"You are saved," I said joyfully.

"To whom do I owe my rescue—to you, Monsieur?"

"To me indirectly—" I was beginning, but she interrupted me fiercely.

"Then, by Heaven, I will die sooner than accept a favour at your hand."

Before I could stop her, before I could divine her purpose, she advanced to the edge of the platform, demanding silence with a gesture.

"The citoyenne speaks!" muttered the people. "Hush! let us hear the good patriot."

Mademoiselle's clear accents rang through the air.

"Listen," she cried, "you who came to see me butchered, and who have been witness to the pardon which your leaders have this moment granted. Hearken, I say, for I reject it! I deny the right of canaille such as they and you to condemn or pardon such as I. I am aristocrat born, one of a race for whom your fathers have toiled for centuries. You prate of the liberties, the

"Then, by Heaven, I will die sooner than accept a favour at your hand."

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rights of the people, you have no liberties, no rights; you are puppets, dancing dolls; it needs but a strong man to pull the string, and you dance fast or slow as he wills. You are never free, Robespierre, or Danton there rules you now as we ruled you then. Now kill me, for I am Mademoiselle de Clermont, and had I power, would destroy such carrion as you without mercy!"

The small disdainful figure stood out against the summer sky. For a moment there was an awful silence, for the mob had scarcely realised the meaning of her words, and those who realised stood aghast at her audacity. But I, with the intuition which love brings, knew that while she hurled her insults at the crowd it was in reality myself that she defied. A pang, strangely compounded of pain and pleasure, shot through me, for hate like hers is born of love and not of indifference. . . . I read her thoughts, and felt that memory had transplanted her to the sunny meadows which surround the château of de Clermont, and by her proud rejection of my aid she made atonement to herself for the kiss she had given and received those years ago.

The tense silence ended; the storm burst, and with a roar like thunder they surged forward to tear her limb from limb.

If there had been time I would have killed her with my own hands, but the first rush of people was upon us. As it was I snatched a stick, and struck madly right and left, but what can one do against a thousand? For an instant Leonie's eyes met mine, and I think from their expression that she forgave. I saw those fiends seize her. . . . I heard a cry . . . then something hit my head . . . there was a roaring sound in my ears, and I knew no more.

* * * *

This happened forty-five years ago. With Mademoiselle's death my patriotism died also. On my recovery from the injuries I had received in the crowd, Danton gave me a pass to England, where I have lived ever since. I have written this down, as my memory is sometimes defective, and I cannot remember things in their right order. My task is now finished and the light grows dim. Listen! do you hear the wind? How it rustles, rustles among the leaves of the chestnut trees. Do you not hear that voice? It is Mademoiselle whispering again——"Raoul, I love you!"

A Miss

"A dainty miss to kiss," said Lou,
And held out Baby May.
"Nice man!" said May. "'Tiss Auntie too!"
Lou blushed and turned away.

"A dainty miss to kiss," said I.
"Just one you'd never miss.
Please do." She shook her head. "O Fie!
I'm not a miss to kiss."

"You need not fear," said I, "my dear
I quite agree with this."
She turned again her face; and then—
A tiny sip of bliss!

"Oh, *how* could you be so untrue,
And break your word like this?"
"My darling Lou, I meant that you
Were not *amiss* to kiss!"

Owen Oliver.

Google

THE RIVAL BROWNIES

1.
Brownie One caught Brownie Two
Kissing Brownie Three.

2.
Brownie One struck Brownie Two—
Jealous Brownie he!

3. "Such a blow can only be
Washed with blood away.

4. "Here's my card, sir: let us fight
At the break of day."

5. At the break of day they met—
Brownies Two and One,

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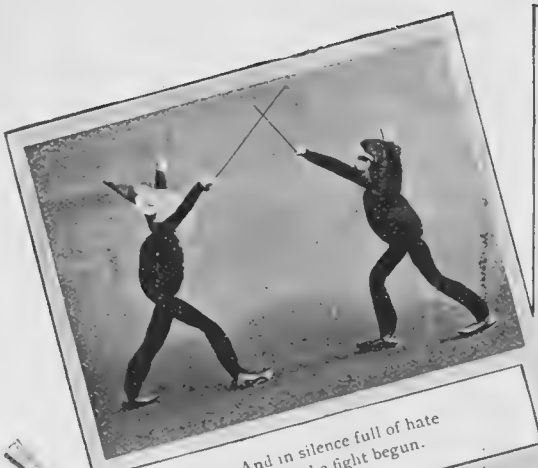

6. And in silence full of hate
Was the fight begun.

7. Pretty fencers, closely matched—
Brownies One and Two;

8. And the swords together clashed,
And the fury grew.

9. Ah, by Gad! a master lunge!
Brownie Two's undone!

10. "Honour now is satisfied!"
Chortled Brownie One.

11. But the law had to be satisfied also.

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A Great Success

By Constance Smedley

A COMEDY SKETCH.

(*All acting rights reserved.*)

CHARACTERS: CECIL KEITH, MARY BOYD, THE PORTER.

SCENE: Entrance hall in one of the blocks of flats in Ashley Gardens.

Fireplace up back, centre. Glass doors leading into vestibule L. Entrance to passage, where lift is, down R. There is a little looking-glass over chimney-piece, a pile of books, Bradshaw and an A.B.C., on mantelshelf. The walls are cold and bare, an armchair each side of fire, a coal-scuttle by fire. A bright fire burns in grate.

Porter asleep over fire. Clock strikes four, porter wakes with a start. Outside the wind is blowing in great gusts.

PORTER. Four o'clock! Ugh! I wonder what time Miss Boyd 'ill be in. If she'd only come, I might doze off peaceable. Mr. Mellish's party won't be gone for another two hours and more (*yawns. Furious gust of wind. He huddles over grate, pokin' it, and putting coal on.*) Ugh! What a night! Who'd ha' thought this was March and Spring! (*Another gust of wind*). Spring! (*He huddles over fire more closely. The outer doors open. Enter Cecil Keith. The snow and rain blow in with him. He is dressed in ragged suit of clothes as tramp. He is soaked through, the snow lies thickly on his shoulders and hat. He wears an evening dress shirt, and tall collar, now like pulp, his hat is a tall silk one, but in a terribly battered condition. He has thin pumps, and silk socks, covered with the snow. His hands are blue with cold, his nose is red, he enters shivering.*)

PORTER (*turning, aghast at his impudence*). Here you! Get out of this! We can't have your sort here!

CECIL (*his teeth chattering*). Don't be such a silly ass! Is Mr. Mellish in?

PORTER. Mr. Mellish has company. He ain't going to be troubled with the likes of you to-night. Now out of this!

CECIL. Oh I say—you are a silly ass. Don't you know me? I used to dig with Mellish two years ago.

PORTER (*staring at him aghast*). Not—Mr. —Keith! Evings, Mr. Keith, how ever have you come to this!

CECIL. Why you don't think I'm really a tramp!

PORTER. I shouldn't like to guess what you may have sunk to!

CECIL. Then all I've to say is con—found! Confound! (*He takes off his hat, flinging it ill-temperedly on chair*).

PORTER (*taking hat, brushing it*). Evings! What a hat!

CECIL. Yes! I said the hat's all right. And they disqualified me because of it. I've come from the Covent Garden Ball and I know I deserved a prize; and the rotters objected to my hat! Said it spoilt the costume. I had to wear a

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decent hat or I should have looked such a bounder.

PORTER. A decent hat! (*Looking at hat, pealing with laughter*).

CECIL. (*Not noticing*). And then they barred my pumps! Don't know if they expected me to dance in hobnailed boots! (*He puts his feet up on chair, and takes off thin shoes and shakes snow off them; he is wearing scarlet silk socks, soaking wet*).

PORTER. You've never walked from Covent Garden up to here in those!

CECIL. I've been tramping London half the night in these!

PORTER. But I thought you was in Egypt, sir; Mr. Mellish said he didn't think you was ever coming back, sir.

CECIL. Then Mellish is a silly ass! I came back to-day. I saw this ball advertised and I thought I'd like to go, and there wasn't time to get a dress, so I rigged up this. I'm supposed to be a tramp.

PORTER. I could see that at a glance, sir!

CECIL (*pleased*). Yes. I thought it rather good, y'know. Those fancy dresses you get at a costumier's make one look so beastly cheap. So I tore up some old suits and messed 'em about, and put on my overcoat—and—and my hat, and went to the ball. Well, you never saw such a failure. Scarcely any one looked at me, and those who did, laughed at my pumps and my socks, and my hair and my collar, and my hat—(*he ruffles up hair excitedly*). Just as if one could go to a ball looking dirty! (*Porter laughs again*). And it was such a ghastly failure altogether, I came away, and then my overcoat had gone, and all my money in it. And I couldn't get a cab to take me, and I had to tramp through this storm (*Furious gust of wind outside*) to my hotel, and when I got there the porter didn't know me, and wanted to give me in charge, and the snow's been snowing, and the rain's been raining, and I hadn't even a penny for a cup of coffee at a coffee-stall. (*He sinks on chair exhausted.*)

"Evings! What a hat!"

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PORTER (*laughing*). You'll excuse me Mr. Keith, but when I think of you owning half Hampshire and—(*roaring with laughter*). I never heard anything so funny in my life!

CECIL (*furious*). Funny! I see nothing funny in it! I shall be lucky if I get off with pneumonia for this!

PORTER. You're not going to walk about all night, sir, are you?

CECIL. No. I'm going up to Mellish, when I'm thawed. I s'pose he's still here.

PORTER. Yes, sir, but—er—Mr. Mellish, he has a bridge party on to-night, a very smart affair his butler tells me . . . there's Lady Cholmondeley and the dowager, and Mr. Pinsent, and—

CECIL. Oh Lord! Well look here, you must slip up quietly and tell him I'm here, and he'll have to smuggle me into the kitchen or somewhere. But he's got to put me up. See?

PORTER. Yes, sir (*giggling*). Very good, sir (*going to lift, returning*). But—what about the morning, sir? I mean clothes. Mr. Mellish is such a very large, stout man, sir.

CECIL. Oh, hang the clothes (*Porter laughs*). There's nothing funny in it, porter! I shall have to get my traps from the hotel. Got a pencil? (*He feels in pocket, produces large red bandanna handkerchief, he is exasperated. Porter laughs, he blows his nose with it*). There's nothing to laugh at.

PORTER. I have a pencil, sir, and envelope.

CECIL. And a stamp?

PORTER. N—o, sir, but I—I could lend you a penny, sir. The post-office is open.

CECIL (*taking penny*). Thanks. (*Furiously*). Will you stop that insane giggling! I'm wet through. I've got a most frightful chest! (*Blows his nose and coughs*). Tear up to Mellish—and—er—don't send in the message, but wait till you can see him yourself! Understand?

PORTER. Yes, sir! (*He goes off laughing*).

CECIL. Confound his impudence (*writing*). "Send portmanteau in room 108 to 125, Ashley Gardens, before ten to-morrow morning. Cecil Keith." There, I'll slip round and post it. I shall catch the five o'clock mail. (*Opens door, furious gust of wind. He disappears. In a minute door reopens.*

Enter MARY BOYD.

She runs lightly up steps, and stands just inside, holding door open, and turning to speak to someone outside. She is a beautiful girl, in evening dress, with elaborate opera-coat).

MARY. I shall be all right now. My maid's sitting up. Good night! Thanks awfully for bringing me. Good night! (*Carriage drives away, she comes into hall and crosses to entrance of lift.*) Bother, the lift's gone! (*Rings bell. Waits, then rings again. Then comes back to fire and warms her hands.*) Oh, what a night it is! How I pity the poor wretch we saw running through the snow and rain as we drove up here. Poor, poor fellow! Oh, how I pity all who have no roof to shelter them to-night! Cecil used to laugh at my—sentiment—he called it! Oh Cecil, Cecil, I wish you hadn't been so rich, and so run after, and such a conquering hero! I had to refuse you, just to show you that you weren't. But, oh why did you take me at my word! Why did you go to Egypt! Not that I could have married you if you'd stayed! Everyone would have called me a fortune hunter. Oh, if you hadn't been so eligible, and so sought after, and so—so smart! (*The door gradually opens. Cecil Keith appears, wet through again, in a more pitiable state than ever. Mary sees him, and screams.*)

CECIL. I beg your—Mary! (*He recognises her and is about to bolt through door.*)

MARY. Oh my poor fellow, don't go. Come to the fire and warm yourself at least. (*Looking in purse*). There's a shilling for you! (*Offers him money*).

CECIL. Oh, hang it all! You don't mean that you've forgotten me!

MARY (*horror-struck*). What—it isn't—it can't be—Cecil!

CECIL. Oh, look here, I know I've been going to the bad ever since you saw me last, but I surely haven't altered as much as that!

MARY. Oh, no—no—now I look at you! Oh, my poor Cecil, how wet you are!

CECIL. Am I? I didn't know—I mean I'd forgotten. *You* haven't altered—unless you've grown more beautiful!

MARY. What! Then even now you—remember—

CECIL. Remember! Yes, I remember you sent me away without a word of hope two years ago! Well, I told you I should go straight to the bad and I have!

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MARY. You don't mean it's I—who—who have driven you—

CECIL. H—m! You thought me altered! No wonder! I've done everything I could to keep you out of my head! I've wasted my time and my money and—there. I didn't mean to see you again. I—I—But I'm keeping you.

MARY. No—no! I'm waiting for the lift. It's upstairs.

CECIL. I'm afraid that's my fault. I sent the porter up to Mellish. I wanted to know if he could take me in to-night.

MARY. Surely he will!

CECIL. Well, you see he's got rather a swagger sort of party on, and I wanted the porter to ask him if he would let me into the kitchen or the—

MARY (*aghast*). The kitchen!

CECIL. Well I'm not exactly—er—presentable!

MARY. Oh, I've never seen you in anything I liked so well.

CECIL (*a pleased and flattered smile coming over his face, he dusts shoes complacently*). Really! Why, I was afraid I looked rather a bounder. Of course, earlier this evening, before I was so wet—

MARY. Oh yes. You mustn't stand in your wet things!

CECIL. They won't hurt me now.

MARY. But how—how did you come to such a pass?

CECIL. Lost all my money—

MARY. All of it.

CECIL. Every penny. I haven't so much as a cab fare!

MARY. Oh, Mr. Mellish can't turn you out. He couldn't be so cruel.

CECIL. Well, it's rather cheek, turning up at this time of night, like this.

MARY. If he doesn't take you in, I'll never speak to him again. He shall!

CECIL. Mary! I believe you're just a little sorry for me! (*He coughs*).

MARY. Sorry! Oh—your cough!

CECIL. Yes, it's awful! My chest feels as if —(*coughs again*).

MARY. Oh Cecil, Cecil, what can I do for you?

CECIL. If you wouldn't mind holding my hand (*he sinks in chair trying to cough very badly*). I beg your pardon, I forgot the state I'm in. Of course, it isn't to be expected—

MARY. Oh, it is! It is! (*She kneels beside his chair, clasping his hands*). Oh, my poor, poor Cecil, why did you take me at my word!

CECIL. You don't mean to say you cared—

"If you wouldn't mind holding my hand."

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MARY. I never knew how much until this moment!

CECIL (*rapturously*). Oh — (*is going to kiss her*), hang the wet! (*kisses her hands*).

MARY. Cecil dear, you'll come and see me first thing in the morning.

CECIL. Rather, what time?

MARY. Nine.

CECIL. Nine! (*Suddenly stopping*). Nine! I was forgetting—I don't know that I can!

MARY. But dearest, you must. I'm going to Paris, the boat-train starts at eleven, my godmother's ill—you must come, darling!

CECIL. Good heavens! Mary, I can't promise you. In the joy of seeing you I —I had forgotten!

MARY. What!

CECIL. My clothes!

MARY. Oh, Cecil, as if they mattered!

CECIL. But, hang it all, they do. A- a fellow has some pride!

MARY. Then I'm more in love than you, for I haven't any. Darling, I've always loved you, always, always, and when you went away, it nearly broke my heart, I can't let you go again! I've five hundred a year, and that's better than nothing. Cecil, my own, you're sure you really love me?

CECIL. Rather!

MARY. Then marry me to-morrow if it's possible, and we'll go to Paris for our honeymoon!

CECIL. Mary! (*He takes her in his arms.*) Will I! Won't I! And I thought you cold (*he kisses her*), and proud (*kisses her*), and heartless (*kisses her*).

MARY. Oh Cecil, do you really mean that you've forgiven me!

CECIL. Rather (*he kisses her*).

MARY. When it's through me you are penniless!

CECIL. Eh? (*He releases her amazed.*) You—you don't mean *you* think these rags real?

MARY. Aren't they?

CECIL (*seeing himself in glass*). You don't mean that's me! Why—then I *do* look a bounder! (*He is furious*).

MARY (*faintly*). Aren't you!

CECIL (*furious*). No! This is my costume! And I was scratched for a prize because they said I was too swagger!

MARY. A prize. I don't understand.

CECIL. At the Covent Garden Ball. Wasn't it unfair? By Gad, I wish they could have heard the cabbies chaff me, I wish they could have seen the hotel porter try to run me in, I wish they could have been here this last ten minutes — no, by Jove, I don't!

MARY. Wait a minute. Then you've not lost your money.

CECIL. The deuce I have. Five pounds in cash and a hundred in fivers!

MARY. Oh!

CECIL. It's all right, darling. The man cleared off with my coat, but I've got the numbers.

MARY. Oh, you don't understand—

CECIL. My darling!

MARY. How dare you! Do you think I'd have let you touch me, if. . . . Oh, when I think what I said to you — and you let me think you were poor and starving and homeless!

CECIL. Well, as it turns out, it's a good job you did.

MARY. It is nothing of the kind! Now that you're rich, things are exactly as they were before you went away!

CECIL. Indeed they're not, for I know you love me now. And you've asked me to marry you, and I've accepted you!

MARY. Oh! (*She goes to lift and rings furiously.*) How dare you.

CECIL (*desperately*). Well look here, the snow's real, and the cough's real, and if you're going back on your word, straight into the streets I go, and I'll sit on a doorstep all night.

MARY. I'm not going to speak to you. I never want to see you again.

CECIL. Good-bye then. (*He goes. She rushes after him*).

MARY. Oh Cecil, how dare you be so silly. (*He kisses her*).

MARY. I hear the lift!

CECIL. Hang the lift!

PORTER (*W. enter Porter*). Mr. Mellish says, come up at once, sir, there's a fire being lit, and he'll have something hot.

MARY. Thank Heaven—

CECIL. Come on then (*Porter goes to lift, they follow*). And I'll be round at nine in the morning if I have to come like this! Why, they've won me a prize after all!

(*Curtain.*)

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Many schoolboys believe that the best way to get rid of a wart is to rub it with a snail. Dirty boy! Poor snail!

SCHOOL SUPERSTITIONS.

A Collection of the Extraordinary Beliefs Prevalent in our Schools.

BY T. PARKER WILSON.

THE veriest schoolboy is not more superstitious than was the learned Dr. Johnson. When out for his morning walk, the doctor was in the habit of touching every post as he passed; and if by any chance he happened to miss one, he was not comfortable in his mind until he had retraced his steps, and rectified his omission. Then again pieces of orange peel would be found treasured up in odd nooks and corners.

For aught we know both of these strange foibles may have been relics of his schooldays. Certain it is that half the superstitious beliefs of this country are to be found in its places of education. A large proportion are so wildly inconsequential that it is impossible to read any meaning into them whatever. But no doubt there is a good solid basis for each, could we only learn it. Unfortunately (from the antiquarian point of view), many originated so far back that the circumstances attendant on their birth are entirely lost.

There is quite a crop of quaint beliefs concerning minor ailments, some of which have a show of reason, while some have not. To the former class belongs the recipe for curing that bane of childhood the sty on the eye.

Procure nine thorns from a gooseberry bush, prick the sty with eight of the thorns in succession, and throw the ninth over the left shoulder. Were it not for this ninth thorn, there is really hardly any superstition here at all. Whatever may be our opinion of the surgical value of lancing a sty eight times it is certainly commonplace enough.

This young person wishes to see her future husband, so she places a piece of wedding cake under her pillow.

Decidedly the most pleasant way of getting rid of warts is to sell them. This may be done to a friend for a nominal sum, and delivery of the purchase will not be insisted upon. Schoolgirls have frequently got rid of warts this way. Warts growing on boys' hands, however, are of quite a different species, and require much more drastic, and truth to tell somewhat unpleasant, means of removal.

Perhaps you do not know that when a new boy arrives at a school his companions are in imminent danger of becoming bald. But dip his head in a basin of water and the danger is obviated.

One is to rub the wart with a snail; then stick the snail on a thorn in the hedge, and leave it there to die. Owing to some mysterious bond of affinity, snail and wart die off together.

A preferable method (from the snail's point of view) consists of *stealing* a piece of raw meat from home, rubbing it on the wart, and then throwing it on a refuse heap, and as the meat rots away so will the wart fade away.

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A schoolgirl invoking the New Moon. She requests the heavenly body to grant her a sight of her future lover.

Again some old saws owe their longevity to the fact that their truth cannot be put to the test until long after schooldays are over. To this class belongs the mystic rite of ducking the head of a new boy in a basin to prevent the rest of his schoolmates from becoming bald!

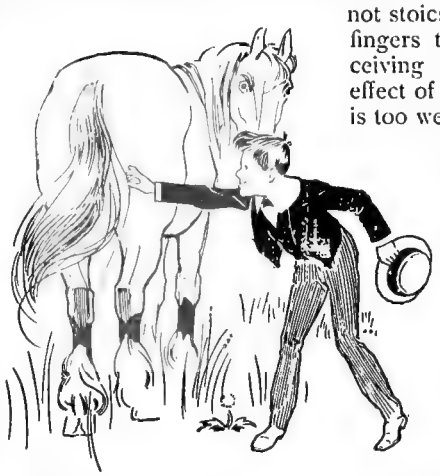
Those relating to girls' matrimonial prospects naturally come in the same category. A girl who can pass a threepenny piece between her front teeth is sure of a rich husband. Sleeping with a piece of cake under the pillow is supposed to be an infallible way of calling up a vision of the destined life partner.

Some girls who are very anxious upon the point, like lovers of larger growth, invoke the aid of the moon. This is done when the moon is new for the first time in the year. Here is the form of supplication:

> New Moon, New Moon, I hail thee,
> By all the virtue in thy body,
> Grant this night that I may see
> Him who my true love is to be.

In order to secure the expected benefits it is necessary, when making the invocation, for the girl to set her back against a tree and her foot upon a stone.

In certain parts of Yorkshire the schoolchildren cherish a belief—which is no doubt fathered by a wish — that if the attendance does not reach fifty the master is bound to give a holiday. On Royal Oak Day, or when the foxhounds enter the village, the elder boys organise pickets, and endeavour to prevent their schoolmates from attending school. Sometimes the schoolmaster gets an inkling of what is going on and appears on the scene with a cane. There seems to be no authentic instance of a holiday ever having been extorted in this way, but that does not in the least affect the faith in the tradition.



Place a horse-hair, freshly pulled from a horse's tail, across the hand, and the sting of the cane is certain to be minimised.

Various are the mystic rites practised at boarding schools to insure getting up in the morning. All have a good rational basis, for it is only necessary to impress an idea on the mind overnight, and it will assert itself before morning.

Placing the shoes T-shaped, at the same time repeating aloud the time of rising; writing the time on the forehead with a wet finger; or bumping the head on the pillows the required number of times are a few examples of this large family.

If you stuff a horse-hair into a cane you may be sure that it will split.

If a boy who is going to be punished takes the precaution of padding himself in the most likely parts with copy books he has good solid grounds for his faith. Probably most boys would prefer to put something tangible between their bodies and the cane, but this cannot be done when the naked hand is to suffer.

School tradition is extraordinarily rich in more or less shadowy expedients to neutralise the bite of the cane. Most have a strong family likeness, but they vary locally in minor details. Rubbing the hand with various substances, to render it impervious to the stroke, may be taken as the general principle.

Some pin their faith to onions, French chalk, and resin, while orange and lemon juice are almost universal. One *strong* objection to onions lies in the fact that boys who are not stoics generally apply their fingers to their eyes after receiving punishment, and the effect of onion juice on the eye is too well known to need comment. A dock leaf being good for nettle sting, some boys apply it before a caning on the principle that prevention is better than cure, but some prefer saltpetre water, or even waggon grease.

It certainly does seem strange that school-children should cling to faith in this particular class of superstition, seeing

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how constantly its efficacy must be disproved. Yet they are ingeniously loyal in the defence of their pet theories, and there is just this to be said that their determination to hide their suffering from their schoolfellows (who, perhaps, swear by rival nostrums) helps to carry them through the ordeal. Then, although they suffer, they are convinced that the pain would be worse but for the healing unguent.

Schoolboy's preliminary to passing an examination. Catch a butterfly and place it under a stone.

Schoolmasters, who are not, as a class, superstitious, can afford to smile at all this. A good many who use straps are aware, however, of the hardening effect of alcohol, and have been known to be mean enough to soak the strap in whisky.

A faith which is still more wonderful is that the cane can be made to split by placing a horsehair across the hand, or by working one into a crevice of the cane. If the hair be plucked fresh from the tail of a living horse so much the better. It is well to select some good-natured old Dobbin, and first purchase his indulgence with a piece of sugar. Nobody can ever be found to have actually witnessed this miracle, though every second schoolboy has heard of someone who has.

Next to superstitions which refer to punishment there is a large crop connected with luck in saying lessons, or in having favourable questions put at examination time. A firm belief among some school-girls is that if during the examination two stockings are borrowed without asking, from two different girls, knotted together, and tied round the waist, beneath the dress, the girl who does all this will not fail in her exam. New girls, who know nothing of this custom, sometimes suffer severely. Waking up in the morning, they cannot find their stockings, and it is the rule in some schools not to allow more than one pair a week.

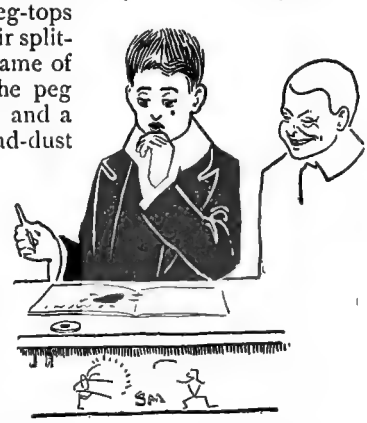
Schoolgirl's preliminary to passing an examination. Steal two stockings, each belonging to a different girl, knot them together and tie them round the waist.

Another sure way to pass an examination is to catch a butterfly and place it under a stone in the ground. Some insist upon the butterfly being the first of the season, while others take a more liberal view, and merely stipulate that it must be one of the earliest. The first form has, needless to say, the better chance of remaining unimpeached until the end of the world.

Even teachers are prone to superstition at examination time. If in the last test examination the results are very good, it is looked on as a bad omen, and if possible another test is arranged.

When a boy makes a blot on his copy-book he regards the circumstance as an omen of coming trouble. There is something so sweetly reasonable in this that at first sight one fails to grasp where the superstition comes in. But when it is added that the boy looks upon the punishment as a piece of misfortune of which the blot was but the augury and not the direct cause, it will be at once seen that here is a superstition of the fatalistic genus, and one which, on account of its exceeding subtlety, is worthy of the first rank.

Boys have some very curious ways of doctoring peg-tops to prevent their splitting in the game of ring top. The peg is pulled out, and a little dry road-dust inserted in the hole. Upon the exact quantity of this dust the merits of the top depends. The peg is then put back, and a top thus doctored is



Make a blot on your copy-book, and misfortune is sure to happen to you—a rather obvious conclusion, perhaps.

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Two girls who say the same thing at the same moment have only to hook their little fingers together, and the thing they desire will be forthwith granted unto them.

worth at least two shop tops, plus twenty marbles. Another way to insure a top being victorious is to induce the girl you like best to keep it for you one day.

The system of barter so dear to the schoolboy is accompanied by strange rites. In some schools no deed of transfer is considered complete till each of the parties has touched cold iron, the first to touch claiming the privilege to re-exchange if he desires. In case of any dispute the party doubted licks his forefinger, and looking earnestly at the disputant says: "Is that wet?" Then wiping his finger on his trousers continues, "Is that dry?"

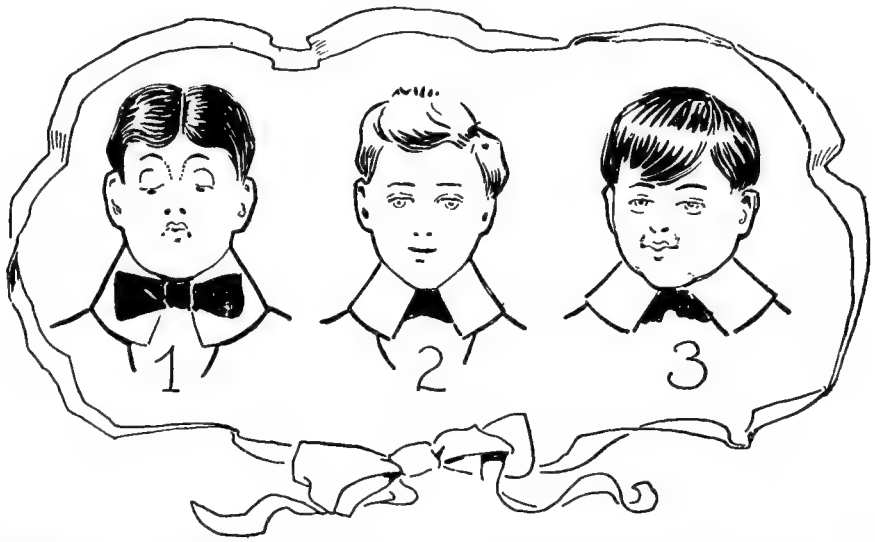
If you wish to make your top hum, drop salt on it.

Having received the only answer possible to these questions, he winds up in this sanguinary fashion:

"Cut my throat and then I'll die." This formula is supposed to settle all doubts regarding honesty.

In some schools a curious standard obtains for judging new boys, but, although the element of fancy largely enters in, it hardly amounts to superstition.

Should a boy have his hair parted in the middle he is considered a dude and a fool. If he has his hair brushed up above his forehead he is considered intelligent, good at sports and lessons; and if, on the other hand, the hair is allowed to stray over the forehead he is good-natured—just the boy for giving things away to his schoolfellows, such as toffee, nuts, etc.



Superstitions connected with the hair. No. 1 is, of course, conceited—his hair is parted in the middle. No. 2 is obviously good at sports—his hair is parted at the side. No. 3 is a good-natured chap—his hair is brushed over his forehead.

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An Unconventional Girl

By Basil Jay.

When a man is a lieutenant in the Royal Navy at five and twenty, devoted to his profession, and has a private income of a thousand a year, some people might be found to regard him with envious eyes. Yet Basil Osborne—the man in question—wore a very discontented expression on his handsome face, as he lounged on a seat on Plymouth Hoe, moodily contemplating the picturesque scene that lay before him.

Suddenly he was roused from his reverie. A girl's hat—of that variety known as a "sailor"—rolled gaily towards him, carried along by the light breeze that swept across the sparkling waters of the Sound.

Stretching out his walking-stick he dexterously arrested its progress, and, picking it up, turned to find its breathless owner by his side.

A beautiful girl she was. Her hair was a fluffy mass, of the colour of the glossy horse-chestnut. Complexion of pink and white rosebuds. Eyes like the summer sky above, and sparkling with mischievous merriment.

"Thanks, so much," she said, as he restored her property with a bow.

"I am afraid you have tired yourself," he said politely. "Won't you sit down?"

"Thank you. It has given me such a chase," she replied, gracefully sinking into the seat. She then proceeded to smooth her rebellious locks, place the hat in position, and secure it firmly with two cruel-looking hat-pins.

There was silence while this operation was in progress. Then she stole a glance at Basil, who was watching her with undisguised admiration.

"What lovely weather, isn't it?" she said demurely.

"Splendid," he acquiesced. "Couldn't be better for the holidays."

"Are you on your holidays?" she asked, with a flash of the blue eyes.

"Er—yes. I am spending a couple of weeks here."

"I am staying here with friends. I think Plymouth a delightful place, don't you?"

"Oh, very."

There was silence again for a few minutes. She was looking intently on the ground, and tracing invisible figures on the asphalt with the end of her sunshade.

"I know what you are thinking about," she said suddenly, giving him another bewildering glance.

"Do you?" he laughed. "Well, what is it? I'll own up if you are right."

"You are wondering who I am, and whether I should be offended if you tried to find out. Am I not right?"

"You have guessed correctly," returned Osborne, feeling quite convinced by this little speech that he knew the kind of girl he had to deal with. "Your father is a millionaire, of course?"

She looked at him intently for a moment, then laughed.

"Oh, no! But he's very well off, and an officer in the Navy——"

"Ah, I thought he was pretty well off," returned Osborne sarcastically.

"At least," she continued, ignoring the interruption, "that is what I have sometimes told people. But I'll be perfectly plain with you. My father is a cabinet-maker. I'm an assistant at a large drapery establishment in London. Now, won't you tell me something about yourself?"

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"Well, I was prepared to inform you that I'm Basil Osborne, lieutenant in the Royal Navy, and have a private income of a thousand a year, etc., etc. But since we are speaking plainly, I don't mind confessing that I'm only George Turner, a cutter in a tailor's shop at Bristol. I am delighted to make your acquaintance, Miss——"

"And I'm equally pleased to know you, Mr. Turner. My name is Roberts—Dora Roberts—but no relation to Lord 'Bobs' you know."

She extended a tiny, well-gloved hand as she said this, with a smile that set Osborne's pulses beating at twice their normal rate. Then she rose.

"I am going on the pier now," she said. "The afternoon concert begins at three."

Osborne immediately discovered that he had come out with the express intention of attending that concert, and begged leave to accompany her. She graciously granted his request, and they set off for the pier together, chatting gaily as they went.

They talked on a variety of subjects, and she proved herself to be very well informed on most points, somewhat to Osborne's surprise. By-and-by she waxed confidential.

"I do hope you won't think me very forward and rude for making your acquaintance so readily," she said wistfully. "No, don't answer yet!" she continued as he was about to interrupt. "I want to explain a little. Oh! you don't know how I've been longing to talk to somebody. You see I'm staying with an old aunt and uncle, and they seem to have no friends. I have scarcely spoken to anyone but them for a whole week. It is a relief to slip out in the afternoon when they are dozing. I generally manage that. This afternoon I was feeling dreadfully lonely, when fate threw you in my way."

"And I hope you do not regret it," said Osborne.

"Far from it," she replied. "But I am afraid that my conduct in ignoring all conventions has, secretly, shocked you."

Osborne hastened to assure her that he felt honoured by her confidence in him; and he meant it.

"I am quick at reading faces," she said, turning her glorious eyes full upon him. "I liked yours directly I saw you. I see no harm in two lonely people trying to make each other's holiday more pleasant. You are lonely, aren't you?"

"Very," assented Osborne. "I have no friends in Plymouth. If you will bestow a little of your society on me, you will be doing a very charitable action."

"I shall be delighted," she said readily, "that is, whenever I have an opportunity. But auntie and uncle don't see things quite in the same light as I, so, to avoid annoyance, I shall not say anything about you to them. Do you mind?"

"Not at all," returned Osborne. "I think it by far the most sensible course to adopt."

They had left the pier by this time, and were now on the Hoe again.

"Well, then, I shall not allow you to see me home," she said, with a smile that compensated for that disappointment.

"But I shall see you again soon," he cried.

"I come on the Hoe every afternoon," she said suggestively.

"Then I shall look out for you to-morrow, here, by the flagstaff."

"Good-bye," she said. Osborne raised his hat and she tripped away.

When she was gone he took a turn up and down the espianade in a better frame of mind than he had been for some time.

He was passing a couple of weeks of his leave at Plymouth before proceeding to some friends in Scotland, and comparative solitude—for when he said he had no friends in Plymouth, he had spoken truly—was beginning to pall on him.

He returned to his hotel with bright anticipations of the morrow.

The next few days passed happily enough. Each afternoon they met at the appointed place, and then a few hours were devoted to one or other of the many attractions that Plymouth offers.

Sometimes they lounged on the balcony of the Pier Pavilion, listening to the tuneful strains of a military band. At others they hired a boat and rowed or sailed round the Sound. Once they crossed over to Cremyll, and lost themselves amid the leafy glories of the beautiful park that is generously thrown open to a grateful public.

Then there were steamer excursions up the charming river Tamar to Calstock, where delicious feasts of strawberries and clotted cream await the visitor.

But wherever they went or whatever they did, Miss Roberts always insisted on paying her full share of the expense entailed, and Osborne's eloquence was wasted in persuading her to alter her decision.

The days sped rapidly and the date of Osborne's departure came all too soon. But

Google

he found that Miss Roberts had another week in Plymouth, so a plausible excuse was dispatched to his friends, and he calmly informed Miss Roberts that his employer had granted him another week's holiday.

"Your governor must be a good sort," said that lady when he told her. "I should be told to look out for another situation if I applied for an extra week. But I'm so glad you've got it."

Osborne was silent, for he felt that, if he spoke, his words must be of a tender nature, and, in spite of the intimacy that now existed between them, there was something in her manner that forbade him to exceed the bounds of platonic friendship.

Hitherto he had respected her unexpressed, but implied desire, but the very next day he was tempted almost beyond his strength.

They were seated side by side in the stern of a light sailing-boat. The breeze had fallen and the empty sail flapped idly against the mast.

Depressing thoughts of the coming separation had taken ho'd of him, and she, too, was unusually quiet. He thought he could detect in her half-averted face, a reflection of his own sad thoughts.

"Only a few more days," he said presently, "and I must say good-bye to Plymouth. This is the jolliest holiday I have ever spent."

Then he sighed.

"I, too, have been very happy," she said softly.

"Miss Roberts!"

She turned quickly. His eyes looked into hers with an expression there was no mistaking.

The colour fled from her face. She looked frightened, and trembled slightly. Then her eyes fell.

Osborne noticed these signs with a feeling akin to despair. And yet prudence whispered it was better so.

When she looked up again there was a firm and resolute look on her fair face, though the colour had not returned.

"All the pleasures of my visit I owe to you, Mr. Turner," she said. "I cannot sufficiently thank you for your goodness. Many men would have taken advantage of my position to make silly, romantic, and tender speeches to me—though I should not have allowed anyone a second opportunity. But I knew I could trust you. The good opinion I formed of you at our first meeting has been more than justified. I am exceedingly grateful for your habitual kindness and courtesy."

With a powerful effort Osborne managed to control his voice.

"Thank you, Miss Roberts," he replied. "I can honestly assure you that you have made my holiday a most delightful one. I am very gratified to hear that I have been the unconscious means of making your visit here a pleasant one. Above all I esteem,

They lost themselves amid the glories of the beautiful park.

Google

Osborne turned to recognise in his only fellow-traveller the penitent deceiver—Dora.

and shall endeavour to be worthy of, your good opinion."

Then he lowered the sail and rowed homewards in comparative silence.

When he reached the flagstaff next day a boy accosted him.

"Are you Mr. Turner, sir?" he asked.

"Yes," said Osborne.

"Miss Roberts sent this note, sir. No answer wanted."

Osborne seized it, while the boy disappeared in the crowd.

"Dear Mr. Turner" (the letter ran). "After what occurred yesterday I have not the courage to see you again. I can no longer disguise from myself the nature of the sentiments with which you regard me. The knowledge of this has brought me both happiness and misery. Happiness because—dare I confess it?—your love is returned, and misery because, alas! it must be stifled. A mischievous impulse induced me to deceive you when we first met. How bitterly I am repenting now. Dear friend, my name is not Roberts and my father really is an admiral in the Navy. I am afraid this confession will cause you great sorrow. Believe me I, too, am suffering much. I cannot write more, but you will understand. Despise me as I deserve, and forget the heart-broken and penitent —Dora——"

When Osborne read this he was strongly tempted, regardless of the people around, to press it to his lips.

"Dear little girl!" was his mental comment. "I'll find her if I have to call on all the admirals in the Navy."

He returned to his hotel and made hasty preparations for departure. Plymouth had suddenly lost all charm for him, and he determined to leave by the next train.

Fortunately there was no need to stand on ceremony with his friends in Scotland. A telegram announcing the time of his arrival was a sufficient intimation of his intentions.

He reached the station just in the nick of time. A porter seized his miscellaneous belongings and flung them into the nearest compartment, and then bundled in their dishevelled owner with but little more ceremony, just as the train moved off. Osborne flung the man a tip, and then turned to recognise in his only fellow-traveller the penitent deceiver—Dora.

Very pale and forlorn she looked. He was by her side in a moment, pouring out explanations in a torrent of words.

"And now that I'm not a cutter in a tailor's shop—did you really ever think I was?"—he said, "there is nothing to prevent me from telling you plainly how much I love you. I cannot live without you, my darling. Look up, dearest one, and tell me that you will be my wife."

Then Dora looked into his face with eyes more eloquent than words could ever be, and his happiness was complete.

Google

"My husband is so poetic," said one lady to another in a tramcar the other day.

"Have you ever tried rubbin' his jints with hartshorn liniment, mum?" interrupted a woman, with a market basket at her feet, who was seated at a lady's elbow and overheard the remark. "That'll straighten him as quick as anything I know of, if he ain't got it too bad."

* * * * *

Judge: "One thing appears tolerably certain, which is, that one of the musicians gave you a slap in the face. Now can you tell me, was it the violinist or the pianoforte player?"

Plaintiff: "Judging from the touch, I am inclined to think it was the pianist."

* * * * *

"I should think," said Algie, "judging from the way these trousers shrink, the wool was shorn from an unusually timid lamb."

THE HORNS OF A DILEMMA.

A field, a bull, a maiden fair:
Her features were expressive,
The field, uncomfortably bare,
The bull, alas! aggressive.

A gasp, a sigh, a piercing cry,
With words of terror in it;
A gentle cyclist wheeling by
Just at the crucial minute.

A prickly hedge to bar the way;—
The cyclist, torn and gory,
The monster baffled of his prey;
Retreat achieved with glory.

A swoon, a face of ghastly hue,
An arm, a passing carriage,
A platonistic friendship true,—
And later on,—a marriage.

MORAL.

Maids who would fain transform your state,
From single into double,
Select your bull, and trust to fate
To save you further trouble.

* * * * *

"Don't you smell fire?"

"No, I don't think I do."

"I don't either; but most people do if you ask them."

* * * * *

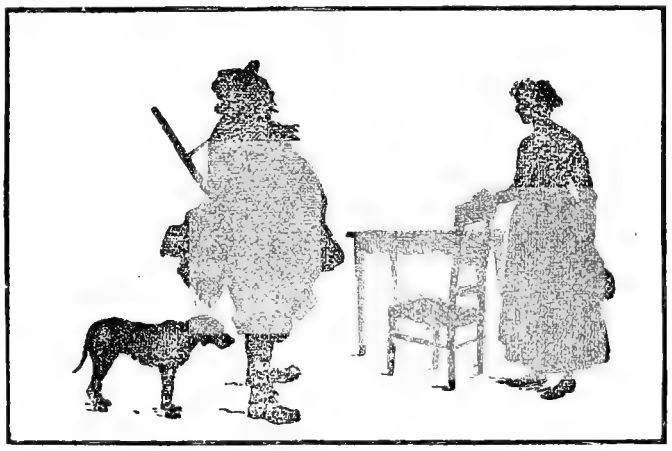
"This is George the Fourth," said an exhibitor of waxworks for the million at a penny per head, pointing to a very slim figure with a theatrical crown on his head.

"I thought he was a very stout man," observed a spectator.

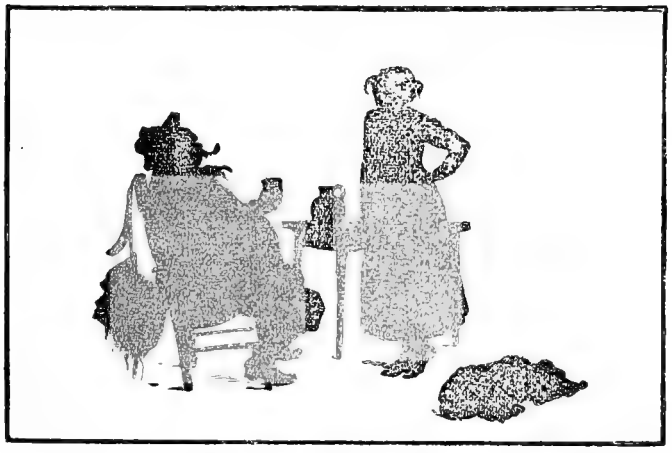
"Werry likely," replied the man, sharply, not approving of the comment of his visitor; "but if you'd a been here without wittles half as long as he has you'd be twice as thin."

"You'd be twice as thin."

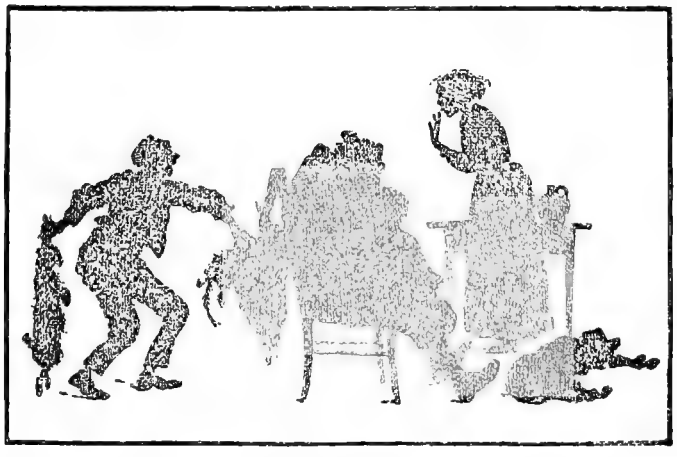
Google



The Tired Nimrod: "A glass of ale, my dear."



The Tired Nimrod: "Yes, my dear, I shot the beast at a hundred yards.



A dark deed.

ANGRY ADVERTISER: "If you think I am going to pay you for this ad. you are mistaken."

ADVERTISING CLERK: "What's the matter with it?"

ANGRY ADVERTISER: "You promised to put it next to reading matter, and you've got it right alongside a column of poetry."

* * *

A JURYMAN'S EXCUSE.

Some entertaining stories are told of the tricks by which men summoned to attend as common jurymen attempt to avoid the duty cast upon them. A court official says that one morning a little girl whose eyes just appeared above the desk, timidly exclaimed: "Please, sir, father can't come; he can't put on his boots."

The official asked the nervous little creature what was the matter with her parent. She hesitated; evidently she had not been instructed further than the statement she had made, and looking straight into the official's twinkling eyes, she said: "Well, sir, father don't wear boots; he's got wooden legs. I wasn't told to say anything else, sir; that's all."

* * *

WIFE: "What makes you so late to-night, dear?"

HUSBAND (with indignation): "I've been arrested."

WIFE: "Arrested?"

HUSBAND: "Yes. I bought an umbrella to-day and marked on it, 'Stolen from H. Smirk.' The first policeman I met arrested me. I told him my name was Smirk, but he wouldn't believe me."

Google

"Isn't Potter a believer in the faith cure?"

"He is."

"Is it true that he wouldn't have a doctor for his wife the other day when she was ill?"

"It is quite true."

"Why, I saw the doctor go into his house just now!"

"Oh, that's all right. He's ill now himself."

* * *

Mr. Quick (calling upon Mr. Parvenu in his new town residence): "Them your ancestors up there, Jake?"

Mr. Parvenu: "Yes, sir. The whole line of 'em from right back."

Mr. Quick: "Well, Jake, they came very near being mine, too, and would if I hadn't found a job lot of old portraits at Stickstein's auction round that came £50 cheaper."

* * *

He went to dine with a bachelor friend who prided himself that his few pictures were gems. After having enjoyed themselves well—too well in fact—at dinner, they adjourned to the picture gallery, where the host pointed out to his guest a landscape saying:

"What do you think of that my boy, eh?"

"Beautiful, old chap, very fine, awfully good; them trees wave about so naturally."

* * *

Laura: "I don't know, George, it seems such a solemn thing to marry. Have you counted the cost?"

George: "The cost, Laura? The cost? Bless you! I've got a clergyman cousin that'll marry us for nothing!"

The Tired Nimrod: "You may keep the change, my dear."

The Tired Nimrod: "The biggest hare you ever saw. Shot him at a hundred yards!"

Tableau.

Google

Charlie: "Aw—I say, portah, must I take an extra ticket for a puppy."

Porter: "I reckon you can travel as an ordinary passenger."

* * * * *

ASPIRANT: "What is the chief requisite for a young lady entering the literary field?"

EDITOR: "Postage stamps."

* * * * *

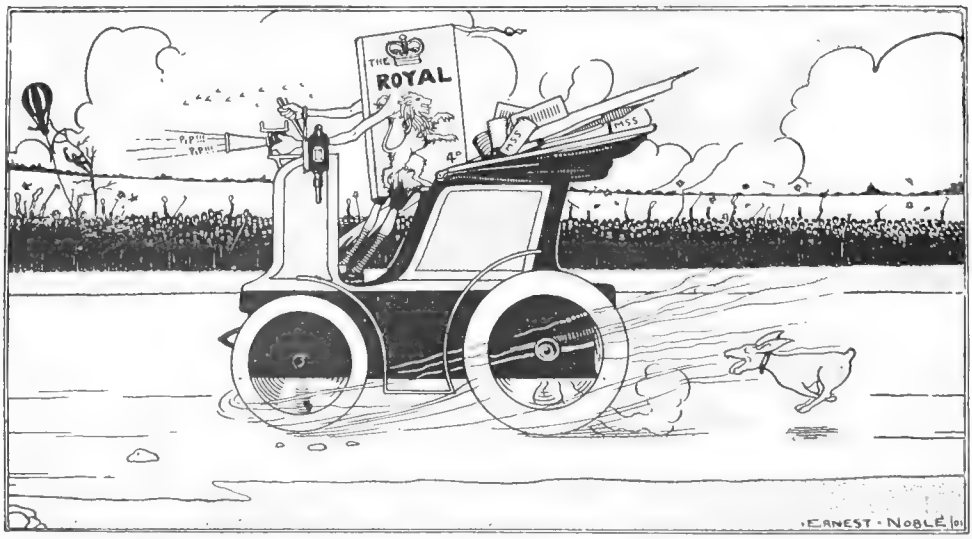
HAVE.

Have you ever been had by a "have?" Has a friend, for instance, ever asked you suddenly, with a puzzled wrinkle of his brows: "What's on at the Lyceum just now?" and then, when you have obligingly told him, coolly made answer: "Oh, *I* thought it was the roof!" One of the most objectionable "haves" I have ever encountered is the one in which you are asked to pronounce "M-a-c-g-r-e-i-g," and, when you have done this, to pronounce "M-a-c-A-l-i-s-t-e-r," and then M-a-c-L-e-a-n," and then "M-a-c-D-o-n-a-l-d," and "M-a-c-D-o-u-g-a-l," and "M-a-c-h-i-n-e," Unless one is very wide-awake, one naturally says "Mac-Hine."

Then again, there is a spelling "have" of the same nature with which most people can be caught. You tell some innocent friend that he cannot spell four easy words that you will give him within half a minute. If he thinks he can, you ask him to spell "Receive." This he does correctly, and you ask him to spell "Believe." Next you ask him to spell "Conceive." "C-o-n-c-e-i-v-e," says he, but you say "No," and continue to say "No" to every fresh attempt he makes, until the half minute has passed. Then you tell him that "No" is spelt "N-o."

"Eh mon, I see nae joke in that."

If you have ever been had by a "have," I shall not only be pleased to hear from you about it, but will give a prize of half-a-guinea for the most ingenious "have" that is addressed to the "Have Editor," care of ROYAL MAGAZINE, Henrietta Street, London.



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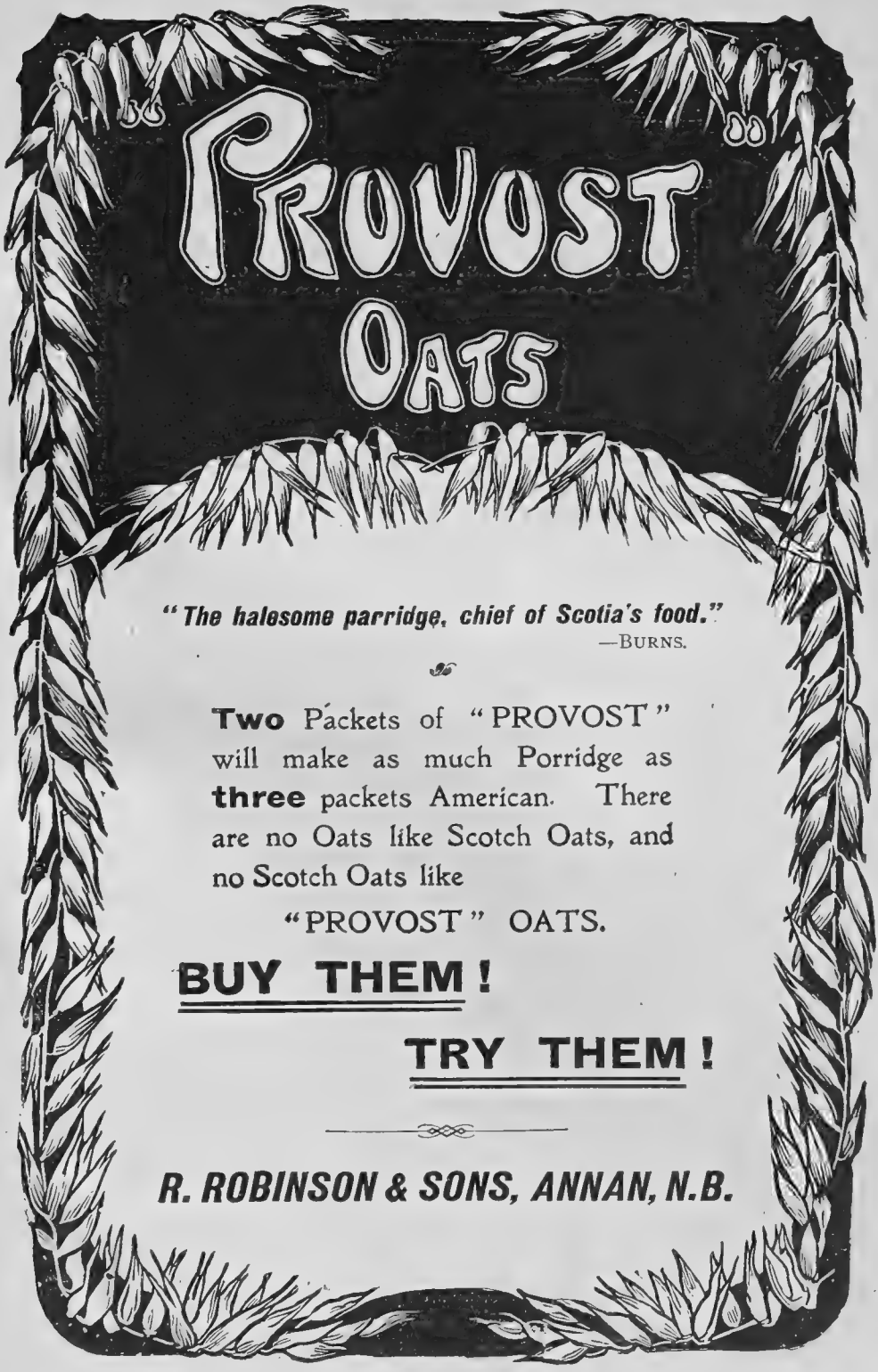

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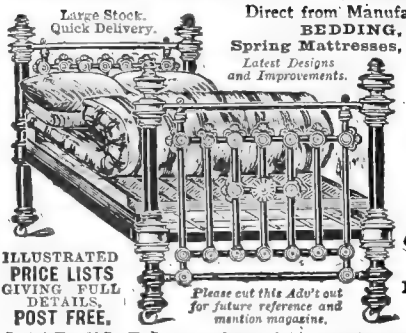

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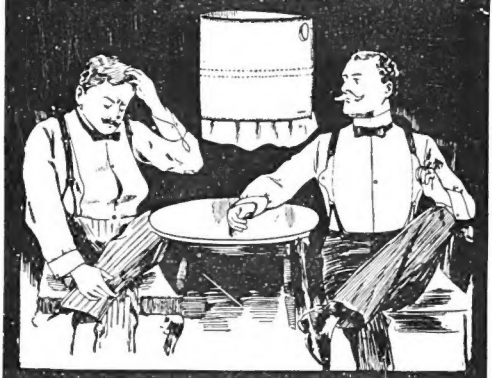

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